

Canadian National Railways

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Churchill: —by asking for information which he has been offered by the minister and which can be given to him easily at a later time. He is making an excuse for his failure to appear at the committee meeting the other day.

The Chairman: Order. I understand that the minister has requested or moved that I rise and report progress.

Mr. Chevrier: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I am not going to allow the house leader to get away with the statement he made a moment ago. The house leader cannot come into the House of Commons and make the statement that the hon. member for Laurier is delaying a bill affecting the province of Manitoba for such and such a reason. That procedure is against the rules of the house. The hon. member is reflecting on the motives of another hon. member.

The house leader knows full well that when this matter was brought before the house he obtained from the opposition the assurance that not only this bill but all other railway bills would be expedited and that the opposition would co-operate to the fullest extent. That co-operation was given not only here on the resolution stage and on the second reading stage but in the standing committee, where I am told that in less than an hour these two bills were passed. How then can the house leader rise in his place and say that there has been delay? But then when we come to the committee of the whole, I say that whether or not a member was at the meeting of the standing committee, or whether members of parliament who are not members of the committee were there, they are entitled to get certain information which we did not receive this morning.

I am not going to cast any reflection on anybody, whether it be the minister or anybody else. However, as was said by the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate, I say that the minister should be here with his officers. His officers can be obtained at a moment's notice and should at least be in a position to give the house the amount of the freight rate. How can that procedure be delaying the proceedings of the house? If the freight rate had been given in the first instance there would not have been the slightest delay.

I say to the house leader that he has no right to make the statement he made. I am not going to ask him to withdraw his words; I am quite content to leave them as they are. However, I say to him that he has no

[Mr. Churchill.]

right to impute motives to me or any other member of parliament and say that we are delaying the passage of the bill, when the fact is that we have done everything in our power to assist in the implementation of it.

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Chairman—

The Chairman: Order. I believe the hon. member has now made his position clear in this matter. As the Minister of Transport has indicated that he intended to move that the committee rise and report progress, I do now—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I rise on a point of order.

The Chairman: I have a question that I should like to ask the Minister of Transport. I wish to ask him whether I was correct in my understanding that he wishes to move that the committee rise and report progress at this time.

Some hon. Members: Closure.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Before you put that question, Mr. Chairman, may I say that suggestion has been made by no one else in the chamber. The only one who has made that suggestion is Your Honour.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): If I may say so, it is an improper suggestion to come from the Chair.

An hon. Member: It is closure.

Mr. Balcer: I made the suggestion.

An hon. Member: Closure.

Mr. Chevrier: The minister did not make a motion.

The Chairman: Order, please. I heard the Minister of Transport make the suggestion and I am therefore asking him now whether he wishes to make a motion for that purpose at this time.

Mr. Habel: Closure.

Mr. Balcer: I move that the committee rise and report progress.

The Chairman: Shall I rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again later this day?

Some hon. Members: No.

An hon. Member: Closure.

Motion agreed to: Yeas, 30; nays, 12.

During the taking of the vote:

An hon. Member: Closure.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): It is closure without notice.