Benidickson) that the subject matter of this bill be referred to the special committee on procedure.

Mr. Fisher: Since there is a resolution on the order paper dealing with the same subject, and since he has made this motion, it seems almost superfluous for me to keep that resolution on the order paper. Would he also consider having that resolution sent to the committee, since it covers the very same thing?

Mr. McNaught: I may point out Mr. Speaker, that there is a distinction between the resolution and the bill. It is possible to refer the subject matter of a bill to a special committee, but it is not within the rules to refer the resolution.

Mr. Churchill: I understand the minister has moved that the subject matter of this bill be referred to the committee on procedure. Is this the committee of the house on rules and procedure?

Mr. Walker: The special committee.

Mr. Churchill: Well I wonder, Mr. Speaker, whether this is the type of subject matter that that special committee should be considering. What has this particular bill to do with the rules of procedure of the House of Commons? This has to do with the setting up of an official to investigate complaints which may originate from all quarters of Canada. It has no relationship whatever to the conduct of business within this chamber. If the committee diverts its attention to a subject as comprehensive as this, it will not have time to deal with the matters which we, as members of the House of Commons, thought the committee was going to deal with, namely the rules and procedure of this house. Having had experience over a number of years as a member of similar special committees I can say it is a heavy task, indeed, that the special committee has undertaken. If that committee is to revise the rules of the house and present its findings for consideration, it will have no time at all to deal with the subject of an ombudsman; or members of the committee could easily give their attention to that matter rather than to their prime task.

So the minister's proposal amounts, in effect, to one of two things. It is either, in an indirect way, giving a six months hoist to a private member's bill or it is saddling the committee on rules and procedure with a subject with which it has no concern whatsoever. For these reasons I think it would be far better if the minister were to withdraw his motion. Otherwise—I see it is only seven minutes to six—I believe I could think up other things to say about it, and we could postpone consideration of the motion.

Office of Parliamentary Commissioner

Mr. Prittie: Mr. Speaker, perhaps at this point—

Mr. Churchill: Is the hon. member raising a point of order?

Mr. Thompson: I thought the hon. gentleman was sitting down.

Mr. Churchill: Oh no, I have the floor. If I sat down the hon. member would be speaking again, and I do not want to listen to him any more. Besides, you would be closing the debate on this subject.

Mr. Prittie: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker; I am not sure if it is one or not. I do not intend to hold the floor. If the objection raised by the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. Churchill) is valid at all, may I ask whether the minister might consider sending this subject to some other committee, possibly the committee on privileges and elections? I do not want to see the motion talked out when there seems to be a good opportunity for an investigation of the bill.

An hon. Member: Privileges and elections.

Mr. MacNaught: I would have really no objection to referring the subject matter of this bill to the committee on privileges and elections if that would meet the objection raised by the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre.

Mr. Churchill: We could give unanimous consent to the minister withdrawing his motion and presenting another.

Mr. Lambert: Might I interject merely to say that I doubt whether there is power to refer this matter to Mr. Speaker's committee on procedure, because that is a special committee which is bound by specific terms of reference. On the other hand the standing committee on privileges and elections—and here I am subject to correction—is not bound by any specific terms of reference; it stands already by the rules. I share the opinion of my hon. friend that this question of an ombudsman is one with which the committee on privileges and elections would be better qualified to deal. In any case, I can assure hon. members that the committee on procedure has more on its plate, now, than it can readily handle.

Motion (Mr. MacNaught) withdrawn.

Mr. MacNaught: I move, seconded by the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys (Mr. Benidickson):

That the subject matter of Bill No. C-7 be referred to the standing committee on privileges and elections.

Motion agreed to.