

Motions for Papers

these consultants were retained to brief senior management. There is no report which could be tabled and I would ask the hon. member to withdraw his motion.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: The motion is dropped.

Order discharged and motion withdrawn.

Mr. McCleave: Another abuse of parliamentary procedure!

An hon. Member: Why should you be allowed to move these motions on behalf of somebody else?

Mr. McCleave: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, before the hon. member loses his temper, I did ask that these motions stand until the hon. member comes back but the government felt that we should go ahead with them. I would say right now, Mr. Speaker, that if the answers to the rest of the motions of the member for Regina East are like those we have been getting, perhaps we should just transfer all of them.

Mr. McCleave: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, I raised it initially and I asked—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There is a point of order before the House at the present time. I believe the President of the Privy Council was seeking the floor for the purpose of addressing himself to the point of order. I would recognize the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants in a moment.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, from time to time there have been suggestions that this side of the House was not responding to questions and motions but apparently the trouble today is that we are responding too much. The fact of the matter is that when there is a motion for papers and there is no paper at all to enable us to respond to the motion, it seems to me there is no point in having it stood. The motion should be removed from the Order Paper. Equally, if there are other valid reasons, whether competitive reasons involving a private company or international negotiations, that a motion should not be accepted, it should be dealt with. I share with the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants the concern that the time of the House is being used in this way but I think he should direct his

[Mr. O'Connell.]

remarks to the hon. member for Regina East who put all these motions on the Order Paper in the first place.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Halifax-East Hants on a point of order.

Mr. McCleave: Mr. Speaker—

An hon. Member: Sit down!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. McCleave: I am going to insist on my rights—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please! I believe the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants is rising to the same point of order. He has the floor.

Mr. McCleave: Yes, indeed I am, Mr. Speaker. As a backbencher I have listened for many days since this Parliament started this sort of thing where there are fishing expeditions, where the hook is thrown out without even any bait or without even any knowledge of anything relating to the facts.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McCleave: The result is that we have spent about 40 minutes on this exercise this afternoon and heaven only knows how many many minutes before, without any serious attempt by the person who grinds this porridge machine to be responsible or to know what is going to come forth. As a backbencher I object to this procedure very strenuously.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McCleave: I hope there can be some correction of it, sir.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, members have a perfect right to seek information. They get little enough information in this House.

An hon. Member: This is an abuse of privilege.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): The only way they can get information is to put a motion on the Order Paper. The difficulty which the government finds itself in, Mr. Speaker, is not due to the fact that we have asked that these stand. The fact is that we are getting some answers today on motions that were tabled last October. The government now answers us on the last day.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): June 1.