

Privilege

no problem with making two government appointees that must come under the consideration of the transport committee.

I do not understand how on the one hand he can make one claim and on the other take action which is in need of examination by the hand that he says he cannot do anything with. It makes no sense to me. This job is frustrating enough with all its rules and regulations without having points of argument put forth by the chief government Whip as has been presented to us today.

• (1120)

On the other point of order, Mr. Speaker, I rose in this House on a point of privilege because I feel that my privileges have been directly breached in that when I put Standing Order 106(3) to the transport committee, a conscious effort was made to ensure that members of the Conservative Party were not in attendance at that meeting of transport.

What I remind you, Sir, to consider in your deliberation is that when I asked the parliamentary secretary how many of his members were going to attend that committee meeting, his response was: "I am not sure. You will have to wait and see". That was not it, Mr. Speaker. His response directly to me was: "Stan, none are showing up today". That is a deliberate handcuffing of the committee.

Mr. Boudria: It is true. I was there.

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, it is not normal in this Chamber for one member to claim that another member said something when that member is not here to deny or refute it. That is inconsistent with other rulings from the Chair on other occasions.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the hon. member for Hamilton West could conclude his remarks and then we will hear him.

Mr. Keyes: Mr. Speaker, you have my remarks now on the record, just as the fellow member of the transport committee, the member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan, has quite concisely put the argument to you.

I would hope, Sir, that you would come to a speedy resolution on this debacle.

Mr. Boudria: Very briefly. Earlier on I referred to Standing Order 106. To be more precise, that was Standing Order 106(3) of our rules.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands, briefly. Then I will come back to the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Very briefly, Mr. Speaker. The chief government whip has requested that there be unanimous consent of the House to vote on the report of the striking committee. We are quite prepared to debate the report of the striking committee in this House and would like the opportunity to do so.

I would be delighted if the government on motions today would move one of the motions it has for concurrence in the report and debate it. I understand the government House leader does not want to do that. He would like to proceed with the government bill.

If the government Whip is prepared to move the adoption of the report, we are quite prepared to have a debate. Of course, ultimately, there will be a vote. But we feel it should be discussed in this House because what the government is doing to the committees of this House is wrong.

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to belabour the point. There are two items I need to raise, though. The chief government Whip made reference to the standard practice of the House adopting the striking committee report unanimously and without debate.

I would suggest to you, Sir, that the past practice of the striking committee report tended to be a unanimous report. It was not unanimous because there is a fundamental disagreement as to the proposal by the government to reduce our membership on a number of committees; from two members down to one.

The irony, Mr. Speaker, is that one of the most highly attended committees is the transport committee where we have had, in fact, more members in the opposition than we had seats at the table. It is one that we worked hard at to pursue the matters of transport.

I would also just like to add that we, too, would be happy to debate this at great length. Almost every one of my members is excited about the possibility of getting into this debate and that would also mean that a lot of House time would be used up.