

Business of the House

house decides the motion should be carried, the matter would be referred to a committee as proposed by the hon. member for St. John's East. I would therefore put the motion of the hon. member for St. John's East, as follows:

Mr. McGrath seconded by the hon. member for Calgary North, moves that the second report of the standing committee on transport and communications be referred to the standing committee on privileges and elections to determine the reason for the omission of the resolution adopted by the committee on November 23th, from the second report of the committee presented to the house on November 29th, and which reads as follows:

"Resolved:—That the Canadian Transport Commission be requested to postpone the implementation of its decision to abandon railway service in Newfoundland until such a time as the committee travel to Newfoundland to study the transportation problems of the Atlantic provinces."

Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

● (3:20 p.m.)

BROADCASTING**INQUIRY AS TO REQUESTS FOR TAPES OF NEWS BROADCASTS**

Right Hon. P.-E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, on Thursday last the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants inquired whether any member of the task force on government information had requested the Canadian Radio-Television Commission to ask Canadian radio stations for tapes of news broadcasts. I stated that I would inquire, and on the following day I informed the house that the answer to this question was no.

While the answer given to the house was technically correct, in that no member of the task force made any such request, I have since learned that a researcher employed by the task force did initiate such a request.

The task force, as hon. members know, is seeking to assess the effectiveness of government information services. To assist it in doing so the task force studies the manner in which information about government activities reaches the public. Information printed in the daily and periodical press is collected through the employment of clipping services; information broadcast by radio stations is equally important but requires a different technique of collection. The Canadian Radio-Television Commission was approached in this respect for its technical assistance. What was being studied was not the operation of

any radio station but only the transmission of news events. A technical supervisor at C.R.T.C. undertook to request ten radio stations to provide tapes. This request was made at the end of November.

I felt it necessary, Mr. Speaker, to enlarge to this extent on my previous answer, to assure the house that there is no attempt on the part of the government or on the part of the task force to withhold information in this respect, and I apologize should my brief answer of Friday have been regarded as in any sense complete.

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, since I was the member who raised this question I should like to thank the right hon. Prime Minister for his more complete explanation today. I wish now to simply say for the record that it is a matter of regret that the officials of either one or other body who advise him gave him incorrect advice in the first place.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**LATER CONSIDERATION OF MOTION FOR CONCURRENCE IN COMMITTEE REPORT**

On the order: Motions:

December 6, 1968—Mr. Blair (Chairman of the special committee on procedure of the house)

That the fourth report of the special committee on procedure of the house presented to the house on Friday, December 6, 1968, be concurred in.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I am wondering whether the house will agree at this stage, before the hon. member proceeds with his motion for concurrence, that this motion be taken as the first order of government business in order that the ordinary routine proceedings can be followed. I believe hon. members and the government might be prepared to accept this suggestion.

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I must consider this in view of standing order 43(2), and would accept this suggestion with the understanding that the provisions of this standing order would apply, having the effect to transfer this as the first item of government business, giving it priority thereafter. Subject to that I think this suggestion would be acceptable.

Mr. Speaker: Is that agreed?

Mr. Baldwin: Agreed.