

support my contention that the principle of democracy applies—

Mr. Starr: That is right.

Mr. McIntosh:—starting in this house, and that it should end here in this house. A rule has been made where by temporarily—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I appreciate the point made by the hon. member and I shall certainly bear it in mind when the time comes to reach a decision, but perhaps we should try to move on. I will now recognize the hon. member for Cape Breton South.

● (11:30 a.m.)

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, I was beginning to wonder who had been recognized. There is more talking from the Liberal side of the house than from the one who has been given your recognition.

Since what happened in the committee and what has developed here in the house as a result of the question of privilege raised by the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre, we have heard the hon. member for Essex West (Mr. Gray) and the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) stand up in defence of the chairman concerning the conditions which prevailed in the committee this morning. I should think the only people who would be in a position to comment on the developments in the committee are those who witnessed what happened there this morning. What happened in the committee I believe is something that neither the Secretary of State for External Affairs nor the Prime Minister would condone.

I might comment on what the chairman of the committee himself said as to his duties as chairman. He referred to the difficulty experienced by chairmen in other committees. He mentioned the fact that some members who chair committees of this house, because they are attending their first parliament and have inadequate knowledge of the rules and procedures as well as inadequate experience, are running into considerable difficulty. In reflecting upon these other chairmen it would be fair to say that possibly he had in mind the chairman of the fisheries committee.

What happened this morning at what we might call the eleventh hour was that a member tried to put a motion to the chair in respect of meeting this afternoon. In all fairness to the chairman—and he can contradict this statement or accept it, but this is the understanding I have—I think he had some doubt in his mind as to whether there

Conduct of Chairman of Defence Committee was a motion before the committee to meet this afternoon. While members on both sides of the committee were speaking—and there is no doubt that sides have been established in the committee, one against the other—and while he was trying to make up his mind as to whether there was a motion before the committee, the house bells were ringing. At that point the chairman raised his gavel and indicated to the committee that there would be a further meeting this afternoon at two o'clock and thereby cut off any further discussion in respect of any of the rules of the house which are applicable to committees.

When the hon. member for Essex West and the hon. member for Skeena indicate that under the rules the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre had an opportunity to discuss this matter, this is not the case. There was absolutely no opportunity to discuss the rules or anything else. The fact that the chairman raised his gavel, adjourned the meeting, said that we would meet at two o'clock, and then rose from his position as chairman without further ado should be a clear indication that there was no opportunity in committee to discuss the matter of the meeting this afternoon. Therefore the appeal on the question of privilege has been brought to your attention.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I notice there are four more members who wish to take part in this debate. I will recognize the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra (Mr. Deachman) or any other member who wishes to take part in the discussion of the point of privilege raised by the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre, but I am wondering whether this is the consensus of the house. In any event, for the moment I will call on the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra.

Mr. Grant Deachman (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, the standing committee on national defence now has before it Bill No. C-243, and today's meeting was the 39th meeting of that committee. We have heard some 25 to 30 witnesses. At the meeting of the steering committee the question arose as to how we should now proceed and whether we should begin the clause by clause consideration of the bill.

Yesterday after the presentation of that report a motion was made, which this morning I ruled out of order on the ground that it was made while another topic was being discussed. Then a further motion was moved this morning that we adopt the report of the