

Privilege

the original negotiations to refer this to the Standing Committee on Transport. Surely, if the standing committee were to meet soon, the government would have continued with its original plan.

In conclusion, I submit that the following establishes a *prima facie* case that the ability of members to fulfil their roles and responsibilities is being impeded by the chief government Whip. First, the Standing Committee on Transport is not meeting and cannot meet until the government Whip calls an organizational meeting. Second, the motion to establish a Special Committee on Transport is evidence of their intention to not call a meeting of the Standing Committee on Transport. Third, the appointments of the deputy minister and associate deputy minister have been referred to the Standing Committee on Transport. Fourth, until the Transport Committee meets, organizes, and elects a chair, I nor any other member of the House can ask for these appointees to come to committee. And, fifth, there is every indication that these appointments thus not be reviewed.

• (1110)

I apologize for taking up so much of your time, and the time of the House. I hope with your guidance, this entire matter can be resolved. If you find there is *prima facie* evidence, I would be delighted to introduce a motion to refer the matter to committee, in this case, not the Standing Committee on Transport.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I rise to support, very briefly, the comments just made, but I want to add one or two further elements as well.

There is an additional Standing Order of the House which I believe is being breached by the action of the government in this case, namely, Standing Order 106. The Speaker will recall that when the question of privilege was raised in the House the last time, the Committee on Transport had been asked to sit, pursuant to Standing Order 106 and Standing Order 108. They refer to a committee meeting further to a request by hon. members, having petitioned the chairman of the committee and causing it to meet for the purposes of studying a specific issue.

My colleague, the hon. member for Hamilton West and others, made exactly that request but by not providing the sufficient number of members in order to cause a quorum, the government made it impossible for the committee to choose a chairperson of that particular committee.

The Standing Orders were not followed by this particular action. That is very regrettable because the committee, at that time, wanted to study the issue of the Hamilton Harbour, which is a very important issue, brought to the attention of the House by my colleague, the hon. member for Hamilton West. In spite of specific Standing Orders enabling members to refer such matters to the committee and in spite of the action having been taken by a group of hon. members of the House, the committee has never studied it. The government's action thus has caused a breach of yet another Standing Order, in addition to the one raised by our colleague, the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan, earlier today.

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell has just provided the House with the arguments relevant to the reality that the orders in our Standing Orders are being obeyed. Standing Order 106 does govern the situation, to some extent, and the House is acting as if Standing Order 106 were be attended to in the way that it should.

I want to go back to the arguments raised by the Whip for the New Democratic Party and I think that part of what he said is that something could occur only through my actions, as the chief government Whip. That is simply not correct. With regard to the responsibility of the Striking Committee, Standing Order 104(1)(a) reads in part:

—within the first ten sitting days after the Monday following Labour Day, lists of Members to compose the standing committees of the House and to act for the House on standing joint committees—

That is a responsibility which the committee I chair has and we met that obligation and reported to the House on October 5. Standing Order 104(1)(b) states that we may not report to the House again any earlier than the end of this calendar year.

We have a single report from the committee. The Standing Order says that can be the only report for this fall session related to the composition of committees of the House. We have done that.