

Privileges and Elections

this matter and in respect of which a motion has been moved for concurrence.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): It is in the record.

Mr. McGrath: If the hon. member will bear with me, I will read the parts that I think are relevant to my remarks. I will read the conclusions of the committee:

Your committee reports that the reason for the omission is that it was never moved and concurred in that the said resolution adopted by the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications be part of its second report.

I dissent from that statement. I said so in the committee and I do so at this time. Anybody who has read the transcript of the evidence, especially volume No. 6 for November 28, given before the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications, and more particularly anybody who was present at that time, would agree with my contention that the drafting of this report omitted or gave no consideration to the substance of my resolution, to the substance of the debate which preceded it, but instead chose to confine itself to purely technical grounds. I do not accept that part of the report and I shall refer to the evidence to show why. I read from page 107 of the evidence of the committee, volume No. 6, for November 28. I quote my own remarks from that page:

My motion is that the committee recommend to the house—

This left no doubt as to what I was trying to do.

—that this particular decision not be implemented until this committee has had a chance to go to the Atlantic provinces.

Preceding that, at the outset of the meeting on that day, November 28, the draft version of the second report was read to the committee. It contained the recommendation to the house which is now before the house and is on today's order paper. It contained the recommendation to the house that the committee be empowered to undertake a study of transportation in the Atlantic provinces.

In asking for this power the committee had in mind requesting the permission of the house or the government—I forget the particular technicality involved—to proceed with a continuation of the aborted trip of the committee last winter. The committee was called back last winter because of a crisis in the house at the time. The committee was going to ask whether the same terms of reference

[Mr. McGrath.]

could be applied in order that it could undertake a study of the transportation problems of the Atlantic provinces and in fact go to the Atlantic provinces to examine the transportation difficulties at first hand.

It was with this second report in mind that I moved my resolution at the conclusion of that day's sitting. In the preamble to my resolution I stated what I had in mind. I stated—and this is taken from the evidence as reported at page 107 of the committee's proceedings—that I clearly intended this matter to come before the house in the form of a recommendation to the house because parliament was supreme in regard to it. I clearly intended that the recommendation would be made to the house that this decision not be implemented, that is, that the buses be phased in and the trains phased out, until the committee had had an opportunity in connection with its proposed study of transportation problems in the Atlantic provinces to go to Newfoundland.

Hon. members know, and the house leader knows from his experience, that the conduct of inquiries in committee and the conduct of committees generally is less formal than proceedings in the house. Formal speeches are not made in committee; prepared speeches are not made. It is a sort of dialogue, if you like; it is a give and take. That is why I was perhaps not prudent enough or careful enough—

Mr. Anderson: Hear, hear.

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Anderson) is making his usual unintelligent observation from his seat.

Mr. Anderson: Mr. Speaker, I merely agreed with the hon. member.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. McGrath: Perhaps I was neither prudent enough nor wise enough at the time to put my motion in written form. I suggest that neither was the hon. member for Manicouagan prudent or wise enough at the time to insist, as is now done in committees, that my motion be put in written form, because if that had happened perhaps this whole matter could have been cleared up. In any event, I did not do that. This is why my motion, which appears at page 108 and which forms the substance of my question of privilege, does not contain the words "recommend to the house".