

least one representative from each party, before the committee sits.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator Guay: Your party—that is, the Conservative Party—is so technical about wanting to follow rules and regulations that I think you ought to set the example when you are the one who advises them and are paid a large salary. You ought to follow the proper procedure.

Senator Olson: Earn that \$60,000, Senator Murray.

Senator Perrault: Earn that \$60,000.

Senator Smith: May I ask the Leader of the Government why he always gets so upset when he does not have his own way?

Hon. John M. Godfrey: Honourable senators, as the Joint Chairman of the Standing Joint Committee on Regulations and other Statutory Instruments, I can say that we met last Thursday and that we will meet this Thursday. There is no reason for our not meeting and, as far as I am concerned, Senator Murray has followed exactly the right procedure.

There is no requirement that our committee have representatives from each party. As long as there is one senator and one member of the House of Commons present, we can meet, and we shall continue to follow the same procedure as Senator Murray has followed.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator Frith: Honourable senators, just so there is no question about oral questions being asked of committee chairmen, rule 20 provides that questions may be asked, without notice to the chairman of a committee—

Senator Flynn: We know that.

Senator Frith: Someone called "Order!" when I tried to put a question to him.

The Leader of the Opposition says that I am in order, so now I will ask the question.

Just to be absolutely clear, both Senator Murray and, I take it, Senator Godfrey are saying that they, as joint chairmen representing the Senate, can call meetings of their respective committees and can call such meetings to order without the co-operation, consent or presence of their joint chairman. Is that what Senator Murray is saying? Am I not right that that is what he did?

● (2035)

Senator Perrault: That is what he did.

Senator Murray: The Deputy Leader of the Government is completely inaccurate in one very important respect: I did not call the committee. The committee—

Senator Frith: Senator Murray said he called it to order.

Senator Olson: Senator Murray called the meeting to order.

Senator Murray: The committee meeting was called by the steering committee, many weeks ago, for Tuesday, March 9, a decision that was adopted by the full committee.

Senator Flynn: The notice is in *Debates of the Senate*.

Senator Murray: My contention is that one of the joint chairmen may not cancel that meeting unilaterally.

Senator Frith: But he can call it to order, which is what Senator Murray said he did.

Senator Murray: There was a quorum present. One can call, one has called and one does call a meeting to order when there is a quorum present.

Senator Frith: Just to be perfectly clear, do I understand that Senator Murray could call the meeting to order and also that he could call the meeting himself tomorrow?

Senator Flynn: No, no; that is not what he did.

Senator Murray: On the contrary.

Senator Flynn: Senator Frith should listen to what Senator Murray says.

Senator Frith: Well, I'm trying to. Let him tell me.

Senator Murray: On the contrary, the position is—

Senator Perrault: Senator Murray needs your help, does he?

Senator Flynn: The leader's help would certainly not be very useful.

Some Hon. Senators: Order!

Senator Flynn: Senator Perrault's remarks are more confusing than helpful.

Senator Murray: The position is that the full committee meeting today, including representatives of both chambers, passed a motion calling a meeting for tomorrow afternoon. I, as joint chairman, had no choice but to put the motion and, as I said—

Some Hon. Senators: Oh, oh!

Senator Murray: —it carried unanimously.

Senator Frith: It depends on whose action is unilateral. That is what counts.

Senator Stollery: Honourable senators, I should like to pursue one element of this matter. My question to Senator Murray, as joint chairman of the joint parliamentary committee, is: Does Senator Murray think that it is proper to preside over a parliamentary committee and to take decisions in Parliament with only one party being represented? Further, did Senator Murray seek advice from any of the officers at the Table in either chamber before taking the decision?

Senator Murray: To answer the second part of the question first, I requested that the opinion which Mr. Corbin told me he had from his officers be relayed to me in writing. This, for their own reasons, the Table officers in the House of Commons declined to do. I then had inquiries made of the officers of the Senate, and I invited them to tell me that I could not proceed because Mr. Corbin had attempted to cancel the meeting, but the officers of the Senate were unable to give me that advice. Whereupon I proceeded.