

has been affirmed and reaffirmed by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) when the question has been put to him on numerous occasions.

I doubt very much that, in the circumstances, this party or this government would want to adopt a policy of eliminating the reference to the Queen from the oath of allegiance. I feel very strongly, as hon. members on both sides have said, that the Queen holds a special place in the hearts of Canadians and that the oath of allegiance has real meaning to us. We swear to that oath and it has real meaning to new Canadians who take it. I do not believe that new Canadians coming to this country and learning a little about our history, as they must before they go to the citizenship court, feel anything but pride in taking part in a ceremony in which Canadians have taken part over the years. I think that in fact it gives them special pride in their country and in joining hands with Canadians who have taken this oath in the past.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRIVILEGE

MR. LEWIS—ALLEGED STATEMENTS REFLECTING ON JUDGES—RULING BY MR. SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Before we call it six o'clock perhaps hon. members would allow the Chair to make a brief ruling in reference to a matter which was raised earlier today in the House.

Earlier today the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis), in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 17, gave notice of his intention to rise on a question of privilege at the opening of our sitting. In his notice the hon. member indicated that he intended to refer to a motion proposed yesterday by the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) under Standing Order 43. The hon. member for York South suggested that the words used by the right hon. member were in breach of parliamentary privilege. On this basis the hon. member proposed the following motion:

That the false charges made by the right hon. member for Prince Albert, as recorded on page 2243 of *Hansard* for Monday, May 15, 1972, be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections for consideration and report.

The Chair is required to determine whether there is a prima facie case of privilege. If a ruling were made in the affirmative, the hon. member's motion could be put and debated and the House itself would determine whether the matter should be referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections for consideration and Report. The suggestion made by the hon. member for York South is, therefore, that the words spoken in the House by the right hon. member for Prince Albert found a prima facie case of privilege.

• (1800)

When the matter was first raised in the House this afternoon, and indeed when the motion was proposed to the House by the right hon. member for Prince Albert

Pension Act and Other Acts

(Mr. Diefenbaker) yesterday, the Chair expressed its reluctance at finding that the statements or conduct of hon. members should be referred to a committee for scrutiny. This is a feeling which I am sure is shared by all hon. members. It is certainly a view which is based on long-standing tradition in this House. I am advised that the last instance when a specific charge made by one member against another was accepted by the Chair for consideration as a question of privilege goes back to the year 1924. On that occasion, and on the few other occasions prior to 1924 when such a question went before a committee of the House, the charge against the member had reference to alleged wrongdoing.

The procedural position was explained clearly by Mr. Speaker Michener in a ruling dated June 1959, and reported at page 582 of the *Journals* of the House of Commons for that year. The then Speaker ruled that a charge in specific terms had to be made before a prima facie case of privilege could be found. The motion proposed by the hon. member for York South does not meet this test. His motion takes issue with what the hon. member calls the false charges made by the right hon. member for Prince Albert. The assertion made by the hon. member for York South cannot be construed, in my estimation, as being a specific charge as set forth from the Chair on many previous occasions and in particular by Mr. Speaker Michener in the ruling to which I have just referred.

We are dealing here essentially with a matter of debate. I take the liberty to repeat the suggestion made yesterday that this is essentially a matter of debate. I feel that hon. members were suggesting a more acceptable procedure when they themselves suggested yesterday that the matter might be the subject of a debate under another Standing Order or procedure. If there continues to be a disposition by hon. members to debate this question, I assume that by agreement simple arrangements can be made to achieve this purpose.

It being six o'clock I do now leave the chair until eight o'clock tonight.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

• (2010)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

PENSION ACT, WAR VETERANS ALLOWANCE ACT AND OTHER ACTS

AMENDMENT TO PROVIDE FOR ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT OF PENSIONS AND ALLOWANCES

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Laing that Bill C-208, to amend the Pension Act, the War Veterans Allowance Act, the Civilian War Pensions and Allowance Act, the Children of War Dead (Education