

*Privilege—Mr. W. Baker*

ment is prepared to give them—and that is damned little. Let us look at this medical insurance bill. We opposed this bill from the day it was first mentioned in that infamous budget of a year ago, and so have the provinces. I do not know why the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Brisco) digressed from a pretty constructive and positive speech to attack the Saskatchewan government. It is caught in the same bind as every other government, whether federal, provincial or municipal, and it is trying to cut back on increased costs.

The provinces have not agreed, and we oppose this bill. We have held it up. We have been accused of filibustering. While we are accused of that publicly, privately the provinces are told by officials not to worry, that there is time, that agreements will be worked out, that the deal will be sweetened and that the federal government will look after the provinces within the next few months. We do not trust this government, and we do not trust the statements it makes in public. Nor do we trust the statements it makes in private, and it is for that reason that we will continue to oppose this bill.

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**PRIVILEGE**

**MR. BAKER (GRENVILLE-CARLETON)—PRIME MINISTER'S FORTHCOMING STATEMENT ON TV CONCERNING AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS AND PILOTS**

**Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I rise at this time on a question of privilege. It has been brought to our attention by representatives of the media that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) intends to go on national television this evening. He intends to interrupt the regular programming on both national television networks at nine o'clock to make a statement to the country with respect to air traffic controllers, airline pilots and the situation in Canada in that respect.

The Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) made a statement in the House today, and the Prime Minister sat through that statement and listened to it with all of us. We had occasion to question the minister. There was a vigorous question period after his statement, and under those circumstances, for the Prime Minister to pre-empt, as he is apparently now able to do, network time all by himself on a matter of such significance that it was discussed in the House of Commons and has been the subject matter of the question period for many days, offends all the rules of the House. It offends not only the rules of the House, the privileges of hon. members, the rights of parliament and the position of parliament in the scheme of things, but I say, with respect, that it also offends good taste, common sense, and involves a downgrading of this parliament. This is not the first time this sort of thing has happened, and if it is going to continue, I think it is time this House looked into its privileges with respect to the Queen's first minister appearing here first to make his statements.

**Mr. Basford:** Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** Just a minute. I still have the floor on a question of privilege.

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** It is not a question of privilege.

[Mr. Orlikow.]

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** The matter which disturbs me is that the Prime Minister has—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Basford:** Mr. Speaker—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner):** Order, please.

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I have the floor.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner):** I suggest the hon. member should come to his question of privilege.

**An hon. Member:** Before six o'clock.

**Mr. Basford:** Let's have a little free speech so that we can reply.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** What do you know about it? The Prime Minister is going on television and—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** My submission is that the privileges of this House are being infringed upon, and that parliament is being bypassed by a Prime Minister who at one time called members of parliament nobodies outside parliament, and now we are being called nobodies when we are here. Further, the Prime Minister must have known, as he sat in his place here today, that he was going to pre-empt that network time, and if that is the case he did not have the common courtesy to tell hon. members that that would be done. More than that, he has not had the common courtesy to tell the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) that this would be done, or to consider the importance of giving the other parties in this House the opportunity to appear and comment as well. This is a matter for the consideration of all Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, I am raising this matter now, but I do not suggest that you should deal with it now. I am raising it as a matter of notice to the Chair that this is a matter which may well be pursued on a later occasion. I would like the right to pursue it on a later occasion and to reserve the right of other hon. members to pursue it, including the Minister of Justice (Mr. Basford) who had the bad manners to rise when I was in the middle of a question of privilege.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Some hon. Members:** Six o'clock.

**Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Justice):** Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief. I trust that hon. members opposite who have been talking about free speech will not cut me off by the clock. The hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker) did not cite one Standing Order or one rule of this House relating to this question of privilege. There is no question of privilege.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has been in this House every day this week during the question period to be examined and cross-examined on the air traffic controllers' situation. The Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) made