

*Privilege—Mr. Cullen*

accept that. What he has not withdrawn, in fact he confirmed it, was that he said that Canadians have been spoiled rotten and that Canadians have been living too high off the hog. I say to the minister, let him go down to Cape Breton and tell them that.

**Mr. Alexander:** The minister is a cry baby.

**Mr. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon-Biggar):** Mr. Speaker, I want to make a brief intervention in connection with this question of privilege. I believe, as the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent) pointed out quite rightly, that this is not a question of privilege but rather an attempt to give an explanation of a rather unfortunate speech which he made to a group of Liberals, trying to tell them what they wanted to hear.

The minister, during the course of his so-called question of privilege, read from a transcript. He also has a recording of what he said during his speech or presentation to those students. I think it might be appropriate for the minister, if he wants to put the matter to rest, rather than read to the House an explanation and selected excerpts from his speech, if he would table the whole transcript and do us a further favour of allowing anyone who cares to hear the tape, which was recorded by his assistant at that meeting—because we on this side have checked the authenticity of the remarks quoted, we looked into the matter, and we understand that a recording was made by an assistant in the minister's office.

All I can say is that the minister has made utterances in the past outside the House which would lend credence to the authenticity of the statements that were attributed to him in the newspaper article, and I want to give a couple of examples. On March 31 of this year in the *Ottawa Journal* there was a report headlined "Tough-Talking Bud Cullen Finds Commons Irrelevant". It goes on to suggest—and there was no question of privilege raised in respect of this allegation—that he appears to enjoy developing a reputation as a tough guy since the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) appointed him to the portfolio last September. He said that he regards parliament as being irrelevant to the point of embarrassment. Now he comes to parliament and attempts, on a question of privilege, to explain precisely what he has said.

At other times he indicated, with respect to the unemployed, that it was his contention that opposition members of parliament want to spoon feed the young people. He was alleging that, in defending the proposition which the Prime Minister put forward that if graduates from our universities could not find work in the country, they could go elsewhere. He underlined that kind of approach with the problems in seeking employment, so it is only natural, when we read another report of a tough guy speaking against people looking for jobs, for us to want to check it and to find out precisely what he said.

As the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby says, when the minister speaks in the House, it is our obligation to accept what he says, and we accept the fact that, as he says, he did not say he wanted to give Canadians a kick in the gut. But I want to suggest to him that if he wants to demonstrate his

[Mr. Broadbent.]

sincerity to us, he will table a transcript of his statement and allow members of the House or of the media to hear the recording that was made of his statement. I think that in this way he would do far more to clarify the situation than by trying to explain it as an alleged question of privilege.

**Mr. Speaker:** Before recognizing the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie), I take it that the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Hnatyshyn) is attempting, while contributing to the question of privilege which remains open for decision, to import into the discussion a point of order relative to the tabling of a document. I am not sure that any of the precedents would apply to a document which is not now in existence and make them apply to some document which would have to be brought into existence presumably by the transcription of a tape. That would be an extension of the principle. However, it may be a matter for further consideration.

**Mr. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West):** Mr. Speaker, I personally feel that I am an aggrieved, innocent party in this matter, and I submit that there is now a question of privilege here with reference to myself. If we look at yesterday's record we will see that a motion under Standing Order 43 was moved by the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay) and seconded by myself, a party who has been seriously impugned by the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Cullen), which stated with regard to this matter that the minister made a number of comments to a group of new Liberals—whatever they are, they must be few in number. I am quoting from page 1581 of *Hansard*. He was reported as saying that Canadians need a kick in the gut and have been living too high off the hog. The motion went on to say:

Since most Canadians would like to read the full context of the minister's remarks in order to be aware of the heartlessness of this government . . .

That this House requests the Minister of Employment to make both a tape of his conversation last week end at the University of Ottawa and a transcript of those remarks available to all individuals who request such.

That was our motion, from which it can easily be seen that we were requesting the whole transcript so that we would know exactly what was said. I seconded that motion.

● (1532)

When I read the minister's comments in the newspaper, I was not surprised because he was merely following the lead of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), who has said that we are obsessed with unemployment, who has shrugged his shoulders at unemployment for the last four years, and who has suggested that Canadians are soft. It is all in the same pattern, so when I read that the minister said—and he has admitted it—that we have been spoiled rotten, I recognized that as part of the same campaign of stating that it is all our fault that Canada and the government are in the position they are in. When he said that Canadians have been living too high off the hog, which he admitted today, I felt myself that the pig has nothing left but a squeak.

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