

the committee. Our party was not consulted on whether that committee should sit when the House was not sitting. We were given very short notice that we must come down here and meet—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The point has been made by the hon. member and I think we ought to go on to another question.

**Mr. Horner:** No, no. I have a question of privilege and I am not going to be silenced that easily. The minister deliberately imputed motives to my actions, and I have the right to defend myself in this House.

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

**Mr. Horner:** As I was saying, without consultation with any of the other parties, and without consulting the steering committee of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, we were summoned to come here on September 22 to hear witnesses on Bill C-197. We were here and we heard witnesses. Through no fault of mine, we are still hearing witnesses. If the minister wanted to rush the bill through and only hear one or two witnesses, that was his prerogative. I know for a fact that copies of the bill were not available all summer long. I accuse the minister of deliberately keeping the public from knowing the full import of this bill, and I accuse the minister as well—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Obviously we are getting involved in a debate on this bill, and I would suggest that this debate continue whenever we reach this order of business. I recognize fully that perhaps the first question should not have been allowed. I continue to recognize the import of the question and the bill referred to in it, but the hon. member has stated his question of privilege.

**Mr. Horner:** The minister should withdraw.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member has placed an interpretation on the words of the minister. Perhaps the minister might want to make an explanation in one word, because we ought to get back to the question period.

**Mr. Horner:** I would like to finish my question of privilege.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. It seems to me that the hon. member has very well enunciated his question of privilege. I understand what his statement is and that the question he has raised is that the hon. Minister of Agriculture has imputed motives. The minis-

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ter has no right to impute motives and, if he has, I am sure he would want to withdraw. The point having been made by the hon. member for Crowfoot, I think we should hear from the Minister of Agriculture. Then I suggest we go on to another subject.

**Mr. Olson:** What I said was that this bill could have been back to the House some time ago if it had received co-operation from the hon. member and his colleagues.

**Mr. Horner:** That is nothing but a lie.

**Mr. Olson:** I will let the record speak for itself. It is very clear that this bill did not have a chance to progress satisfactorily in the committee because the honourable member—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Is the hon. member for Timiskaming rising on the same question?

**Mr. Peters:** Mr. Speaker, while I was not named, nor am I a colleague of the hon. member who rose on the question of privilege, as a member of that committee I believe that the minister did not have the right to make his previous statement or the statement he has just made. The committee was called during the recess and it met. The decision to call witnesses was a decision of that committee. We are still hearing witnesses and the committee has witnesses before it. I believe that the minister is not correct in drawing the inference he obviously has drawn. If he draws that kind of inference, he is in effect saying that somewhere along the line there was a delay. The committee is now meeting to hear the witnesses it called. I do not think the minister has the right to draw that kind of inference about the operations of this committee of which I am a member.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Before we hear the minister further, I understand the hon. member for Annapolis Valley is rising on the same question of privilege.

**Mr. Nowlan:** That is right, Mr. Speaker. I, too, am a member of that committee and I resent without reservation that statement by the minister. There is a fact that has not been put before the House yet. Perhaps the hon. member for Crowfoot intended to mention it but Your Honour rose to try to corral some of the comments that have been made. This very pertinent fact puts the Minister's statement