

*Question of Privilege*

opportunity to point out one of the implications from our hearings that was touched on by the editorial writer. I suggest that there would be a duplication in accepting this motion and at the same time having the debate on concurrence. I think everything could be fully aired then.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe):** As the hon. member for Port Arthur (Mr. Fisher) just said, Mr. Speaker, I think we shall have an opportunity to give our impressions on what went on at the meetings of the committee when we will be asked to approve its report.

However, contrary to what the hon. member for Port Arthur and others before him stated, I do not think the editorial was as irresponsible as all that. Personally, I feel the proceedings of the committee left us quite sceptical about the value of such a committee.

Some hon. members contributed to conceal the truth or to have it concealed, and members of the committee completely washed their hands of the matter submitted to them. However, we shall have the opportunity to discuss this matter further when concurrence in this report will be moved. At that time we shall give our impression, which is far from favourable, about the work done by this committee and the results achieved.

I have not read the editorial in question, but according to what the hon. member who moved the motion said about it, I believe that the editor's remarks are rather justified.

[*Text*]

**Hon. G. J. McIlraith (President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, when the report was tabled two days ago it became a public document. The editorial quoted by the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona was comment on that public document. The main part of the hon. member's argument, I respectfully submit, was irrelevant and ought not to have been received because it was an attempt to review the evidence given in committee. It has been indicated that the committee report will be put before the house by way of a motion for concurrence, and then can be debated. Therefore that part of the hon. member's remarks should not have been received, since they were an attempt to anticipate that debate.

The latter part of his remarks were an expression of his opinion as to the editorial, and the assertion of the view that the editorial was irresponsible. Irresponsibility of

editorials is no part of the concern of this house. Surely the argument that in his view an editorial writer was irresponsible cannot be put forward as the basis for a motion on the ground of breach of privilege of the hon. members of this house. The question of the responsibility or irresponsibility of editorial writings is completely irrelevant to the motion made. The fact that the hon. member does not like the editorial is quite his privilege. Others may like it.

The point here surely must be that the hon. member must make a prima facie case that the privileges of an hon. member have been breached. That case has not been made, and has not been argued by the hon. member beyond the mere assertion that, because of the irresponsibility, that result follows. Unless he can show some improper reflection on the personal character of an hon. member and separate that from mere comment on a public document as a public proceeding in this house, then the case must fail.

For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I respectfully suggest that no question of privilege has been raised that should call for a motion to refer the editorial to the committee.

**Mr. L. T. Pennell (Brant-Haldimand):** Mr. Speaker, I rise only for the purpose of confirming and endorsing what has been said by the hon. member for Port Arthur. May I respectfully point out that the press were present during the hearings and heard all the evidence. The report of the committee having been delivered, it seems to me, with the greatest of respect, that the press can now make what they deem to be fair comment. The motion for concurrence is now on the order paper, and the same opportunity to comment will be accorded every hon. member of the house in due course when the motion for concurrence is moved.

**Mr. Speaker:** If there is no other comment it is my duty and obligation to find whether a prima facie case of privilege has been made out, and I wish to thank all hon. members who have spoken for giving me their advice.

Members may recall that only eight days ago, on Wednesday, June 10, I had occasion to give a long dissertation on a question of privilege, and perhaps I could refer to a few citations quoted therein. The first was Beauchesne's fourth edition, citation 104, paragraph 5, which is as follows:

As a motion taken at the time for matters of privilege is thereby given precedence over the prearranged program of public business, the Speaker requires to be satisfied, both that there is a prima facie case that a breach of privilege