

gentleman brought against the former minister of justice, did parliament make a decision or was it made by an independent inquiry under the presidency of Chief Justice Dorion?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Nielsen: I intended to mention that precedent myself, had the Minister without Portfolio not raised it for me.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Nielsen: Sir, parliament has a precedent in the occurrences of November of 1964 when those opposite demanded that charges be made when I raised the matters of that day. Those charges were made.

Mr. Pickersgill: They were not.

Mr. Nielsen: They were made and as a result an inquiry was set up.

Mr. McIlraith: No.

Mr. Nielsen: That, sir, is the case.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Greene: Did you put up your seat?

Mr. Nielsen: The Minister of Agriculture has mentioned the very point at issue here, and the very point which parliament must deal with in regard to the words of the Minister of Justice.

The Minister of Agriculture asks whether I put up my seat. Let me say that I understood all along that my seat was at stake.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. McIlraith: You refused to lay charges.

Mr. Mackasey: Would the hon. member not admit that the minister of immigration was completely innocent of his charges?

Mr. Nielsen: This is another error perpetuated by the deliberate misconstruction by members on the other side of the house. There were no charges made against the Minister of Immigration, at any time, and if the hon. member for Verdun will check the debates of November 23 to November 25 inclusive he will find that on not one, on not two, but on three or four separate occasions I said at that time that I was casting no aspersions on the then Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Nielsen: You need only check the record.

Question of Privilege

Mr. Cashin: On the matter of privilege, I suggest you check the record.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

An hon. Member: Go back to Joey.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

An hon. Member: You better go back to fishing, Cashin.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It seems to me that we are—

An hon. Member: Let's not talk about fishing. We have caught a big one now.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It seems to me we are getting away from whatever it was we were supposed to be discussing tonight.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I submit that I have defined the issue that parliament must decide on its own accord. When any member, let alone a minister, makes a charge against another member, our practices and the practices followed at Westminster demand that the member substantiate them.

I should like to refer to another question before you, Mr. Speaker. You have ruled that a prima facie question of privilege exists and this places you in a very difficult position in not dealing immediately with the motion founded upon that case. I am not for a moment suggesting that Your Honour should not be given all the time necessary for a decision to be reached, but to accept as a general rule the principle that extensive time be taken, and I am not casting any reflections when I use that term, in order to determine the validity or non-validity of a motion, particularly when the motion or motions relate to a question of privilege as important and as urgent as this one, it seems to me that parliament itself is precluded from proceeding to dispose of the case until such time as a ruling is made.

We are now in the position of having three motions all revolving around an incident which you, sir, have ruled constitutes a prima facie breach of privilege. That being the case, and the prima facie breach of privilege having been adjudicated by you, sir, parliament must not be unduly impeded in dealing with it.

I should think, sir, that of the three motions, Your Honour might be prepared to deal with at least one, particularly the last one that was introduced, namely that a member who makes charges in the house must substantiate them and stake his seat on the