Does the Prime Minister not feel that if he had accepted the suggestion I just made, that would have shortened the flag debate since we could thus have reached a unanimous decision on the choice of the Canadian flag?

I think he should have accepted my suggestion.

[*Text*]

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Arising out of the question asked a moment ago, Mr. Speaker, could the Prime Minister say what happened to the brainstorm of the hon. member for Lapointe, when he suggested in a motion which appeared in *Votes and Proceedings* that this house should start to sit at nine o'clock in the morning and run to, I think it was, midnight? What happened to that motion of the hon. gentleman? In other words, what happened to the motion that would have provided limitation of debate by exhaustion?

PRIVILEGE

MR. STARR—ALLEGED ALTERATION IN "HANSARD" REPORT

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege which has to do with tampering with *Hansard*. A remark made by the Minister of Finance yesterday on page 6659 of *Hansard* has been amended and altered in the printed version of yesterday's report. As reported in the shorthand transcript last night, the Minister of Finance said:

> What is one hundred million?

As printed in *Hansard* this remark is:

> What is the one hundred million?

In other words "the" has been injected into the sentence. This may seem to be a very trivial editorial amendment, but it changes the purport of the remark and skilfully obscures the meaning that was intended. What the minister on second thought regarded as a damaging remark has been made into a confusing one. I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that this is tampering with the official record of parliament, and it should not be indulged in by anyone.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Hon. Walter L. Gordon (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am sure my hon. friend and all other hon. members of the house will agree with me when I say that twisting the words of anybody is a form of intellectual dishonesty—I almost said intellectual blackmail—which is despicable and repellent.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Gordon: To answer the hon. gentleman's question, when I received the blue copy of my remarks the section to which my hon. friend refers was rubbed out in the copy that I saw.

An hon. Member: What a laugh.

Mr. Gordon: I do not know what the interjection from the hon. member over there, who has not been in the house for the last few weeks, means. As I said, the copy that I received was not clear. I asked the parliamentary secretary, as I was in the house and unable to inquire about it myself, to see the *Hansard* reporters to find out what they intended to put in. I have not seen him since about this, and I did not see the report of what was recorded until I got a copy of *Hansard* this morning. It seems to me that unless anybody is trying to twist the remarks that I made, or anybody else made, the *Hansard* report as it is recorded here is eminently correct.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, when one removes from what the hon. gentleman has said the remarks which were entirely unjustified —the references to "despicable" and "twisting"—I can only say that when using those expressions he speaks with an authority that none of the rest of us would endeavour to emulate. However, this change was made and the word "the" has been inserted. The blues indicate that the actual words taken down by the reporter were "What is one hundred million?" That that is so is further shown by the interpolation of the hon. member for Ontario, when he said "The minister says 'What's a hundred million?'" At no time was the article "the" used.

I would ask you to look into this matter, sir, because it is very obvious that the alteration was made. Whether it was made by the hon. gentleman or by somebody under his direction, by a parliamentary secretary or an executive assistant, what was said in this house was altered, and the reason for the alteration is apparent. For the rest of the afternoon there were references to "What's a hundred million?" The words "What is the one hundred million?" do not make any sense now, but they do indicate the degree to which care was taken to try to find some way to get around the damaging effect of the