

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, November 23, 1967

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

PRIVILEGE

[Translation]

Mr. GRÉGOIRE—SPEECH BY TRANSPORT
MINISTER AT AIRPORT CEREMONY

Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege arising out of certain words the Minister of Transport (Mr. Hellyer), who is now taking his seat, uttered two days ago at the opening of the Bagotville airport. On this occasion, he attempted deliberately or otherwise to mislead the population of Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean as well as some members of this house. These words were that:

Paul Hellyer finally paid tribute to the hon. member for Chicoutimi in the House of Commons, Mr. Paul Langlois who was the main mover of this magnificent achievement—

He was speaking of the Bagotville airport.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the facts prove otherwise. Maurice Côté, member for Chicoutimi at the time, and I, between 1963 and 1965 have exchanged correspondence and raised the question several times in the house, so that on May 19, 1965 the then minister of transport, Mr. Pickersgill, said then that he estimated an expenditure of \$300,000 for the new Bagotville airport and of \$175,000 for the facilities, and that tenders would be called the following September, that is in September 1965, before Mr. Langlois was even elected.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I must interrupt the hon. member. When he gave me notice of his question of privilege, I had then expressed some reservations. I must now inform him formally that there is no question of privilege in the point he has just raised.

A member cannot rise on a question of privilege in the house about a statement made outside the house in such circumstances. The hon. member may have a legitimate grievance against the minister, but I do not feel there is a question of privilege.

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Speaker, my question of privilege is to the effect that the statements of two ministers are contradictory.

Mr. Speaker: Unfortunately, I do not think this is a question of privilege.

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Speaker, if it is not a question of privilege, it is intellectual dishonesty on the part of a minister.

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CYPRUS—INQUIRY AS TO PROPOSALS
FOR SETTLEMENT

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the Acting Prime Minister could disclose to the house what practical proposals he and his government are making toward a solution of the crisis on the island of Cyprus.

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am sure my hon. friend will appreciate that when negotiations are under way it is not always desirable to give with precision the response sought in his question. But I should like to say, to the extent that it is possible to deal with this matter now, the house will recall I stated last week that before the outbreak of fighting at Ayios Theodoros in Cyprus, Canada had been developing certain proposals for early action through the United Nations security council—designed to enable the UN and its special representative in Cyprus to act effectively to preserve peace on the island.

Since Sunday night we have been involved in a series of contacts in Ankara, Athens, Nicosia, London, Ottawa and Washington, together with representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom, designed to assist in clarifying the positions and proposals of the two main parties to one another so there is no misunderstanding of a kind which could produce a catastrophe, and so that each may consider the ideas of the other with a view to evolving a compromise which is being sought at this very moment.

As the public statements of the parties have indicated, the points at issue with which the Canadian approaches have been concerned—and this deals directly with my hon. friend's question—include such topics as