

Privilege—Mr. Speyer

Honour suggested guidelines for members of the opposition to follow, that if they have an argument following a question in the House, they should bring up the matter in the late show debate, which I did. Your Honour suggested also that if members have a question in the late show debate and do not get satisfaction, they should call for the production of documents, which I did. The government produced documents which have no relationship whatsoever to the facts they are committed to produce. There was a commitment to the House on November 20, 1980. After several months, they produced the speech in the late night debate of the hon. member for Burin-St. George's. The Minister of the Environment abrogated his responsibilities. He was prepared to take the instructions of the House and produce the documents as requested by the hon. member for Peterborough. So, a year and a half later hundreds of hours have been wasted on this subject. There is a clear indication in *Hansard*; it has been falsely documented for a year by members of the government that it was our government, when it was in power, that deferred the move. This is a gross error; it needs to be corrected.

I ask, on a question of privilege, for this entire matter to be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, so that we can again open the door on the whole issue of the Parks Canada move which I have claimed from the beginning is crass, political pork-barrelling. It should never have occurred. It is another Eldorado Nuclear; it is a de Havilland Dash-8; it is a shame, it is a disgrace, and it is a clear question of privilege.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Fraser: I rise on the same question of privilege.

Madam Speaker: Later, later. Well, I want to speak on that now. I think that is precisely what the hon. member is doing; he is opening up the whole debate to which he is referring. From what I can see, the documents were produced on February 6, 1980, which is quite a while ago. Questions of privilege should be raised at the earliest possible opportunity. The reason for that is: if there is a question of privilege, the House could not function without having dealt with it. The hon. member has waited since November 6 until now, so I think in that itself there is some indication that there was not a real question of privilege.

The question of privilege which he described flows from a return to an order of the House which called for all correspondence, notes, transcripts and other communications. Documents were tabled, as was requested in that order, but the hon. member is not satisfied with the documents he received. It is not for me to judge whether or not the documentation given to the hon. member is complete. If the hon. member has proof that the documentation is not complete, and that there are other documents which have been voluntarily withheld by the minister in this particular case, he should have invoked that and given me an indication of the documents which have not been tabled; but he has not done this. I feel that the hon. member does not have a prima facie case of privilege.

● (2140)

Mr. Fraser: Madam Speaker, on the same question of privilege.

Madam Speaker: It must be made quite clear that the hon. member has risen twice now saying that he wanted to speak on the question of privilege. If he wants to rise on a point of order, that is quite in order. I must warn him that he must not comment on the question of privilege which has just been raised.

Mr. Fraser: I say this with the greatest respect, Madam Speaker. My point of order is that the hon. member made it very clear that in answer to the production of documents, he did not receive any documents—

Some hon. Members: That is not true!

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member did say that he received a document. He did not indicate to me that he knew of other documents which had been withheld. There is no question of privilege there. The hon. member did not indicate that he felt that some documents had been withheld voluntarily by the minister and that he had been frustrated in his desire to obtain all the documents that exist with respect to this particular issue. The question of privilege has been dealt with, it is over. I cannot come back to these arguments.

The hon. member for Cambridge (Mr. Speyer) has a question of privilege as well.

MR. SPEYER—TEXTILE AND CLOTHING BOARD INQUIRY—
QUESTION PRE-EMPTED BY GOVERNMENT MEMBER

Mr. Chris Speyer (Cambridge): Madam Speaker, my question of privilege deals with a set of circumstances which culminated in question period today. I would like to ask for your patience so that I may outline the importance of the question of privilege which I wish to bring to your attention.

On August 31, 1979, pursuant to section 19 of the Textile and Clothing Board Act, Madam Speaker, the Textile and Clothing Board embarked upon an inquiry which was tabled in this House on June 30, 1980. That dealt with the inquiry regarding the effects of imports on the textile and clothing producers in Canada and upon employment in that industry.

There have been many questions raised in this House with respect to this issue, the latest being a question on February 24 put by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald). Recently there have been motions moved under Standing Order 43 with respect to this matter. The importance of it is highlighted in one of the recommendations in the report. That recommendation is that in the first instance the government should announce its decision no later than March 31, 1981, with respect to the recommendations of this report. Obviously, we are now at March 30, and I now wish to pose certain questions concerning the recommendations of the Board of Textile and Clothing inquiry.