

own self-interest. And finally, Mr. Speaker, this applies even to members of parliament voting upon and debating bills before the House dealing with salaries and services of members of parliament.

I move, therefore, that the subject matter of this question of privilege be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I think there is at this point a very fundamental procedural difficulty in regard to the question raised by the hon. member. There seem to be other hon. members who wish to contribute by way of argument or debate to the intent of the remarks of the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. Holt) which were referred to by the hon. member for Athabasca (Mr. Yewchuk). However, the fact is that on the description of the hon. member for Athabasca, the events complained of took place in a standing committee of the House. Indeed, a remedy was sought, or at least according to the description of the hon. member for Athabasca a remedy was sought, in that standing committee and was in some way dealt with at the time by the standing committee.

It has been a very long-standing and clear practice of this House that at no time before any proceedings of a standing committee are reported does this House in any way appeal, examine or scrutinize events which have taken place or decisions or rulings made in a standing committee. Before other hon. members make any intervention in this regard, I would want to make it very clear that this has been a long-standing practice in the House, one from which this incumbent has no desire to depart. However, there may be other hon. members who wish to speak to this question of privilege.

Mr. P. B. Rynard (Simcoe North): Mr. Speaker, my complaint is particularly in regard to the reporting of the CTV network representative, one Eric Malling, who on March 26, on the "Canada AM" program made this statement which is completely false and unfounded. As a matter of fact, I will call as my witness the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. Holt) who stated, as reported at page 44:29 of the health, welfare and social affairs committee, line 28, that she found the hon. member for Simcoe North's evidence very interesting and constructive to the committee.

Mr. J. R. Holmes (Lambton-Kent): Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same question of privilege. It was stated by Eric Malling on CTV, March 26, 1976, that a conflict of interest arose when four Conservative MP physicians were in attendance at the meeting of the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs at which time the Canadian Medical Association presented their brief on Bill C-68. It is my contention that his statements were false and misrepresented my rights, responsibilities and obligations as a member of this parliament. I find his conclusions of the meeting not only unacceptable but illogical. If one is to accept his thesis regarding conflict of interest, then it would preclude farmers from serving on the agricultural committee, lawyers on the judiciary committee, businessmen on the industry, trade and commerce committee, and I could go on to give other examples.

Privilege—Mr. Yewchuk

I have been impressed with the board range of interest and knowledge displayed by members from all corners of the House. I am also impressed that each member offers a degree of expertise in various areas which contributes in a very positive way to the operation of the House and its standing committees. I respectfully submit that members of parliament who have been trained in and have practised medicine provide special expertise in questioning medical witnesses which can be invaluable when combined with the questioning of other interested members of the committee.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Holmes: With respect to the standing committee meeting held on March 25 at which the Canadian Medical Association presented their brief, I must indicate that I did not have the opportunity to question the witnesses, as implied by Mr. Malling. This is not to protest the manner in which the meeting was conducted by the chairman, since he was committed to a fixed time schedule. However, Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that this incident was provoked either intentionally or unintentionally by the final questioner, the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway. In retrospect, I believe that had time permitted additional questioning of the witnesses, the incident might have been defused and this question of privilege made unnecessary.

If the reporter in question had researched his subject matter, he would have found during the second reading debate of Bill C-68 that I made no reference to the Canadian Medical Association, no reference to physicians' salaries or incomes, but was concerned about the future of medicine in Canada and specifically about the quality of medical care. If that reporter had also taken the time to review the debate during private members' hour on May 29, 1975, he would have found that on that occasion I took a position opposed to the official policy of the Canadian Medical Association. Finally, if that reporter had taken the opportunity to read the health paper I had written before the national convention held in Ottawa in 1974, it would have been obvious that my questioning could have been constructive to the proceedings of that day.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Holmes: Mr. Speaker, I wish to make one or two brief comments—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I do not want unduly to restrict the hon. member, but I think he surely must realize that he has gone fairly far afield from the original question of privilege which was raised. I wonder whether he would return to it.

Mr. Holmes: May I make one or two brief comments, Mr. Speaker, regarding politics, development of public policy and the role of parliamentarians, which matters I think are extremely important in this instance. My mandate is to represent all the constituents in my riding of Lambton-Kent irrespective of their political persuasion, vocation, problems or interests. That has been, and will continue to be, my primary responsibility. For an individual to suggest or imply that my purpose is to represent a special interest group either reflects naiveté or lack of understanding on their part of the duties and responsibilities of a member of