

*Administration of Justice*

in question in this case; it is also the rights of every member of the executive, who are our co-equals as members of the privy council.

These are the issues, Mr. Speaker. I make no apology to anyone, as I am sure neither do my colleagues, for exercising the right to consider just what is at issue and what is proposed by the executive in regard to this matter.

The hon. member for Medicine Hat last night raised a serious and important point in connection with the action being proposed by the executive. This point had been adverted to; but on mature reflection, and with the emphasis placed upon it by the hon. member for Medicine Hat, it has given me, Mr. Speaker, as a former Speaker, even greater pause, even though I too belonged for a brief period to the executive.

The question is simply this. Parliament was seized of a question which was deemed by Your Honour to be a *prima facie* question of privilege affecting the privacies of a certain number of members of this house. However, as I have indicated, in essence every member of this house, and equally the members of the executive, are also affected.

I say to the hon. member for Medicine Hat that it was a supreme contempt for the rights of this house for the executive to arrogate unto itself the authority to refer to another body not subject to the determination and control of this house a question involving the privileges of the members of this house.

What a precedent, Mr. Speaker. This is the beginning of the end of the privileges of this house; because if this is permitted with impunity or-by default by hon. members in this house, any executive in the future faced with an abuse or an infringement of the privileges of this house will have a precedent. If any of us have any admiration and love for the institution of parliament, then we must subscribe to the principles that I am now advancing: that no executive, no executive may arrogate unto itself the right to deal with a question of privilege of this house without the full consent and reservation of this house.

I thank the hon. member for Medicine Hat for bringing forward the citations in support of my colleagues, when he advanced the same point. I thank him for drawing that to the attention of this house. I trust it will be brought to the attention of those people who sit in judgment upon us in a gallery a little higher, and that they will bring to the attention of the country that parliament is not a second rate institution to be trampled under

foot by every long distance commentator whose knowledge of the traditions and the workings and the people and the issues in this house is but second hand.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Lambert:** These are my words of sincere protest to this unseemly spectacle, this unholy situation that has been created from the outside, where the events, the pressures and the love of the libido seem to crowd out all else. I refer to sensation mongering and this is a sincere cry of protest on my part.

To return to the point made by the hon. member for Medicine Hat, it is a serious one, and he could get all sorts of citations from May and Beauchesne to support him. There is no question whatsoever, Mr. Speaker, about the validity of the assertion that only parliament can dispose of a question affecting the privileges of parliament. No outside body can usurp this function, and this includes the executive. I was a member of the executive.

**Miss LaMarsh:** Make your motion.

**Mr. Lambert:** The hon. lady is rather impatient. Perhaps she is not as conscious of the rights of this house as she should be, as a member of my profession; and if I repeated her exact language for this house I think she would not be very happy.

**Miss LaMarsh:** What is your motion?

● (3:00 p.m.)

**Mr. Lambert:** I say this. Nobody can usurp these rights. Yet this is precisely what has been proposed for us. The Prime Minister, in a conciliatory mood—I will concede this—introduced the motion yesterday afternoon. My hon. colleague from Kamloops surely had the right to make every point of criticism in regard to it. Did he at any point; did any one of us; did the hon. member for Yukon, ever say these were irreducible terms for consensus? Not one bit. Yet at ten o'clock, why, in all fairness and justice, did we find the Prime Minister saying to us "This is it. This is the word of the executive, and this is what will be done"? I trust those are not the right hon. gentleman's final words, because I will respect him all the more if they are not. The Prime Minister need not humpf and laugh when I say this; I say it in all sincerity, indeed in the greatest sincerity. What I intend to say in the motion I propose to place before this house is advanced with the same sincerity.