

Morality in Government

member for Lapointe admit that the first member in this house to mention the name of a former minister supposedly implicated in the Munsinger affair was none other than his present leader, the hon. member for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette)?

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. If I named the minister mentioned, I never made any accusations against him, and I formally stated in this house that if this concerned only the private life of certain people, the federal parliament was not the place to name or accuse anyone. I did not make accusations against the minister in question, and the hon. member is the one to mention him.

Mr. Valade: Yet, you did mention his name.

Mr. Caouette: Of course, just as I can mention yours anywhere.

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The Chair would like to make reference to the sub-amendment moved by the hon. member for Lapointe (Mr. Grégoire). May I refer the house to citation 203, to be found at page 171 of Beauchesne's fourth edition.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

• (8:20 p.m.)

Mr. Nielsen: Are you going to give us a chance to argue on the validity of the motion, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I should like to refer to citation 203(1) of Beauchesne's fourth edition. Before doing so, may I say to the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), since time is limited, that my mind is made up as to the validity of the sub-amendment. I shall now proceed with my ruling at this time.

Citation 203(1) at page 171 says:

It is an imperative rule that every amendment must be relevant to the question on which the amendment is proposed. Every amendment proposed to be made either to a question or to a proposed amendment should be so framed that if agreed to by the house the question or amendment as amended would be intelligible and consistent with itself.

May I go further and cite for hon. members citation 203(5):

An amendment was ruled out because it raised a new question which could only be considered on a distinct motion after notice.

It is the opinion of the Chair that the sub-amendment moved by the hon. member for Lapointe (Mr. Grégoire) is not relevant to the amendment and, second, that it raises a distinct question which can be considered only by a motion on notice. The Chair therefore rules that the amendment raised by the hon. member for Lapointe is out of order.

[Translation]

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It is a pity you did not ask the opinion of the house, because although I had read the two citations you quoted I wanted to give a third one which would have settled the matter. It was—

[English]

Mr. Churchill: Order. The ruling has been given.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Chair has already made a ruling regarding the sub-amendment moved by the hon. member for Lapointe.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I take part in this debate with a heavy heart because we in this party feel that parliament has had too much mudslinging, scandal mongering and character assassination over the past number of months. We should have welcomed having parliament get down to some of the fundamental matters which affect the welfare of this country.

However, the statement which was attributed in the public press to the commissioner of the R.C.M. Police, in a recent appearance before a judicial inquiry, is something, first of all, which affects the rights of members of this house, and secondly, affects the administration of justice. If the police can be used for political purposes of any kind, under any circumstances, then we have begun the destruction of democracy and the establishment of a police state.

It is therefore important that this matter be discussed. I only regret that some statement such as the one the Prime Minister made this afternoon was not made last Friday, because it is idle to argue that we ought to wait until the judicial inquiry is completed. This is a collateral matter. The statement of the R.C.M.P. commissioner was carried in every newspaper, over every radio, and on every television service, and it has already been judged in the court of public opinion.

The members of this house and the people of Canada were entitled to a clear and explicit statement from the Prime Minister about