

man that the people of Canada decided it was better to have ministers on this side of the House than from his party.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Solicitor General on a question of privilege.

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege, I want to reject very strongly the insinuation that because I received an election contribution from the SIU I was tardy or negligent in my responsibility. The only time someone asked me to investigate the SIU was last week and it was from a distance, in Ontario. The very next day, through the Minister of Labour, we carried out that investigation. There was no tardiness and no neglect whatsoever.

● (1450)

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege, in response to the remarks made—

Some hon. Members: Question, question.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): This is a question of privilege. Have they not heard of that over there?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It has been the habit of the House to hear both sides of an alleged question of privilege. The Solicitor General was listened to a moment ago; I think the Leader of the Opposition ought to be listened to now.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, they may have won the government but they do not occupy the chair of the House. I say, in response to the question of privilege which the Solicitor General raised, that it is clear the Solicitor General or Minister of Labour were involved in a conflict of interest—

An hon. Member: Make a charge!

Mr. Stanfield:—in accepting contributions when there was reason to believe that a matter might come up in their departments in connection with the contributions.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stanfield: Earlier this afternoon I asked the Minister of Labour when he first learned of the matter which his predecessor claimed to have dealt with satisfactorily. I did not obtain a definite answer from the minister. I say to the Solicitor General and to the Acting Prime Minister that if I were Prime Minister of this country, I would have grave doubts—and I do not cast aspersions on any individual minister—whether the minister who had received a contribution from the union in question ought to be in charge of the investigation.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of personal privilege. You know, by his statements, the Leader of the Official Opposition has impugned, by implication, the integrity of a minister of the Crown, when he knows full well that members of governments and members of provincial legislatures—he was a provincial premier—receive contributions from companies, unions and individuals during election time.

Oral Questions

An hon. Member: Why did you send your contribution back?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): These contributions have never been regarded as involving the substance of a conflict of interest. Persisting in this way with innuendo and implications to question the integrity of a minister of the Crown is cowardice. When, I ask the Leader of the Opposition, will he have the courage to make a charge? If he has the courage to make a charge, let him make a charge.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): And let him take the consequences if he cannot substantiate that charge.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We are discussing the question of privilege raised by the Solicitor General. I see the minister rising. I am not disposed to hear from the same hon. member twice on the same question of privilege. I understand that the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands wishes to contribute.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I wish to comment on this question of privilege. It seems to me important for parliament and the whole parliamentary process that the government not only be deemed by itself to be right but that it appear to the public to be right. Previous answers indicate that the RCMP are carrying on an investigation. We have confidence in them to do their duty. The point at issue, however, is this: When the report of the RCMP becomes available to the government, the very people whose integrity has been called in question will be deciding what disposition will be made of that report.

Mr. Fairweather: Right on.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): I submit, through you, Sir, to the government that this matter can be cleared up if the government were to assure the House that when the report of the RCMP has been completed and all the facts have been gathered, the report will either be made public or placed before a committee of this House so that the public can be assured that evidence adduced by the RCMP will be the basis for an unprejudiced decision as to whether further action and investigation is required.

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The House is considering the question of privilege raised by the Solicitor General concerning, as I understand it, some insinuations against him in respect of the carrying out of his duties. Certain questions raised by hon. members may involve insinuations. However, all the questions, and I have listened carefully, have, in my opinion, been orderly questions concerning the inquiry into an important subject. In situations like this there are always insinuations of some sort