

Mr. Trudeau: The question is a bit too esoteric for me. Perhaps the hon. member could write an essay and I will read it.

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INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY

Mr. Steven E. Paproski (Edmonton Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Will the Prime Minister please advise the House what he meant when in his speech on Friday in Winnipeg he emphasized the need to prevent feelings of alienation and suggested that non-Liberal Members of Parliament had helped to create such feelings?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I remind the hon. member and the House in general that questions about statements made by ministers outside the House, including the Prime Minister, can only be put to inquire whether the statements represent government policy. I wonder whether it is traditional or according to our practice to ask what was meant by a speech made outside the House. It is sometimes difficult enough to find out what is meant by a speech made inside the House without trying to ascertain what was meant by speeches made by members outside the House. I would think this is a rather fruitless exercise. The hon. member might like to rephrase his question.

Mr. Paproski: Would the Prime Minister be more specific about what he meant in his speech on Friday in Winnipeg when he emphasized the need to prevent feelings of alienation and suggested that non-Liberal Members of Parliament had helped create such feelings?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I should have thought the point was well illustrated today when, after the government had announced the purchase of 2,000 new hopper cars, the opposition took a purely negative view and—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would think that both the question and the answer show why this rule regarding speeches outside the House is so valuable. I am sure that every Monday we could spend the whole question period discussing speeches made over the weekend by members on both sides of the House. I suggest that is not the purpose of the question period. Questions about speeches made outside the House should be restricted to inquiries whether certain statements represent government policy. That will certainly save us the trouble we are getting into in relation to the hon. member's question.

Mr. Paproski: Mr. Speaker, I regret that I must rise on a question of privilege. I suggest that at a time when this country is being held together by some very thin threads the Prime Minister of this country should not be stooping to blanket condemnation of Members of Parliament who do not belong to his party.

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Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Paproski: Let me say that if it had not been for the many great non-Liberal members in this assembly, this country would be divided.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The rules are perfectly clear that if an hon. member wants to raise a question of privilege he has to give notice of his intention to do so. This is not a question which relates to a debate that has just taken place in the House, but rather to something which took place outside the House before the last hour. Therefore the hon. member had ample opportunity to give the Chair the notice which is required by the Standing Order.

Mr. McIntosh: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member will have to ask a different question because that question was certainly not in order.

Mr. McIntosh: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege concerning the insinuation left by the Prime Minister with regard to members of the opposition. Surely the Prime Minister knows parliamentary procedure well enough to know that it is the duty of opposition members to inquire into transactions such as this when they are announced outside the House and not explained in the House. As Members of Parliament it is our duty to make the Prime Minister explain the details of the deal. We do not know whether the farmers are ultimately going to pay for this or whether it will be the people of Canada.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Obviously we are not talking about the same thing. The hon. member's question did not relate to the point raised originally by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar. I may be at a disadvantage because I did not have the privilege of reading the speech to which all these questions allude. I do appreciate the point raised by the hon. member for Swift Current-Maple Creek. The questions which were asked in relation to this matter were certainly in order and I am quite willing to recognize further questions on the point. However, I thought the question of privilege raised by the hon. member for Edmonton Centre referred to a different part of the speech.

• (1440)

Mr. McIntosh: My question of privilege had nothing to do with the Prime Minister's speech in Winnipeg. It had to do with his remark in the House a few moments ago implying that members of the opposition were not doing their duty in asking these questions and that it is not our privilege to do so. I think the Prime Minister should know better than to make such suggestions that provoke this type of discussion.

An hon. Member: Cheap politics.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question period is quickly going by on these points of order and questions of privilege which may be entirely justified. I would think they are grievances rather than questions of privilege. The hon. member has made his point and I hope we can