

*Motion for Adjournment*

unanimous consent is not given, would we not revert then to the motion to adjourn the house?

**Mr. Speaker:** Of course there is no difficulty about this. I have a suspicion that unanimous consent will not be obtained. I think the suggestion made by the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona is a fair one and I will ask the house whether they wish to give effect to the suggestion of the hon. member that there should be unanimous agreement of the house to revert to the consideration of the question of privilege raised earlier to day by the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona.

**Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister):** Mr. speaker, I think it has been agreed by all members of the house that this charge is a very serious one which impugns the honour and honesty of a minister of the Crown and that it should be formulated in an appropriate resolution and submitted to the appropriate committee of the House of Commons, which is the committee on privileges and elections. If that can be done, there will be no delay in having the committee deal with it. This is a serious matter. In fact, I cannot imagine any matter more serious. Surely, therefore, the wording of the charge against the minister should be made known to this house in writing so that it can be looked at. Perhaps the hon. member, who has been very fair in his references to the desirability of having the charge specific, could put it on the order paper tonight and then we will look at it and will give unanimous consent to proceeding with it at once.

• (4:10 p.m.)

**Some hon. Members:** No, no.

**Mr. Pearson:** But, Mr. Speaker, to put a charge before us orally now when we have already begun to argue about the meaning of certain words in that charge is hardly proper. The hon. member who is making this charge has been much more fair in this matter than some of his colleagues. The hon. member has already admitted that the words "tampering with a witness" could be interpreted in various ways. They could be interpreted as improperly interfering with a witness. Surely, therefore, it is important to have this charge formulated in writing before the house, and I give my assurance to the hon. member that if that is done there will be no delay. We will ask unanimous consent to have it submitted to the appropriate committee to deal with it.

[Mr. Churchill.]

**Mr. Nugent:** The situation is such that there seems to be a little misunderstanding of what is meant by a charge.

**Mr. Hellyer:** You are right.

**Mr. Nugent:** The charge is tampering with a witness; perhaps interfering with a witness is another way of putting it. I have carefully explained what it consists of and what the evidence is upon which I am relying. Surely in a charge I am not supposed to put forward all the evidence and have this be the charge which I have to prove.

**Mr. Starr:** Read it out.

**Mr. Hellyer:** Charge me with censorship and stand the consequences.

**Mr. Nugent:** I have said I have evidence to substantiate a charge of breach of the privileges of the house. I would be quite content to have it deferred until tomorrow if the minister wants an explanation of it. However, the charge is complete as it stands and I think it is clear as it stands. I have further clarified it by giving some of the evidence on which it is based.

I am sure the minister does not expect me to say that the minister did certain things within the confines of his office. All I can go on is what I have been told in the affidavit which Admiral Landymore was prepared to swear. I cannot say what went on in the minister's office or who did it. I know it was his responsibility but I do not know who did it. I have gone as far as I can go. I say there has been a breach of the privileges of this house and those are the facts upon which I rely and which I think prove that charge. I think we can bring evidence to prove the result, and it is the result that shows there was tampering with the evidence while it was under the minister's control. Further than that I cannot go, Mr. Speaker. I do believe it would be unfair to suggest that I can go any further without having personal knowledge. I wonder whether we cannot proceed on the basis of reverting to the question of privilege so that these things can be gone into in detail? I am certainly going to take my full responsibility.

**Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Minister of Public Works):** There has been a great deal of discussion this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, part of which has been heated, starting off with a charge of impropriety against the minister in relation to certain evidence given before a committee. I will not go through the different