

Privilege—Mr. McKinnon

when he made his misleading remarks on May 13 concerning Vice-Admiral Boyle's resignation, and I hope he will withdraw them. If he is the gentleman and parliamentarian I have always considered him to be, he will do so. In the unlikely event that the minister is not willing to do so, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. McKenzie),

That the matter of the Minister of National Defence misleading the House concerning Vice-Admiral Boyle's resignation be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, as a result of the allegations made by the hon. member, I have reviewed the correspondence exchanged between Admiral Boyle and myself and with other officers of the department. I have inquired about discussions as well. It would be normal in reading the correspondence that Admiral Boyle would construe that one of the alternatives available to him was that of resignation. In my view, the manner in which the question of resignation has been raised is a legitimate misunderstanding. I am aware that the option of his resignation was privately discussed with him as would be normal between senior officers under similar circumstances.

I very much regret that Admiral Boyle, who has served Canada well for the past 38 years, apparently interpreted the discussions and the exchange of correspondence as a request for resignation, when in fact it was only another alternative open to him, as it would be to any other senior serving officer.

● (1530)

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, may I take part in this matter?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Halifax-East Hants.

Mr. McCleave: Mr. Speaker, I have spoken to Admiral Boyle on this. He did not want to release the correspondence himself but he did say that he hoped, for the sake of his own reputation, the minister would be good enough to release the correspondence the minister has mentioned. Therefore, I make that request on behalf of Admiral Boyle.

Mr. Danson: Certainly, I have no objection, Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated earlier. However, since it is personal and confidential correspondence I would really want to have the assurance of Admiral Boyle himself. Then, I would have no hesitation in tabling the correspondence that ensued.

Mr. McKinnon: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order. It is extraordinary to allow a member to participate twice in discussion on the same subject. Unless there is a specific way in which the hon. member for Victoria might be of assistance at this time, I would have to have some indication of the nature of the contribution he wishes to make.

Mr. McKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I simply wish to say that, in view of the sterility of the reply of the minister, I wish my motion to stand.

[Mr. McKinnon.]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. In the circumstances the Chair would certainly like some time to review the matter and consider the precedents. In particular, I would like to review the previous contribution of the hon. member for Victoria and to examine the contents of the minister's answer carefully to see whether or not there is a difference of opinion or a difference of interpretation, either in the answers given by the minister in the House or leading up to those answers, of the events now described by the minister occurring between Admiral Boyle and the minister. In any case, I should like to reserve on the matter to study these answers very carefully and see to what conclusion they lead me. Therefore, I will reserve my opinion on the question of privilege.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I just want to give notice that I may have a question of privilege to raise tomorrow as a result of an answer given by the Minister of National Revenue (Miss Bégin) to another member which unfortunately I did not hear but which has been related to me. I should like to take a look at the matter but I thought I should serve notice on you now, sir.

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Speaker, in connection with the point of order raised on the question of privilege raised by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), I should have said earlier that I have a statement I wish to make tomorrow when the subject comes up, and that I do not want anyone on the other side saying that they had no notice. It has nothing to do with the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) and it has not anything directly to do with the hon. member for Maison-neuve-Rosemont (Mr. Joyal); it is another illustration of what we feel to be a dangerous situation in connection with interference with the media and the free flow of information from parliament to the people. It relates to the situation in radio and television communications in Newfoundland, to the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Jamieson) and his position. I will be making a submission on the matter tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, but I wanted to give notice so that I do not hear any member crying out "unfair" or whatever. It is a serious point that I have to raise.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, can the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council inform the House what he intends to deal with today in terms of government business and for the balance of the week which is allotted to the government?

Mr. Goodale: Mr. Speaker, I can give an initial indication at this stage of the order of business. The next two days, of course, are allotted days. For the balance of the day, we will be proceeding with the legislation relating to small harbours, which we are in the process of dealing with at the moment. We will then move on to Bill C-23, the metric legislation and,