

Order Paper of this House in 1975. It concerned allegations by Igor Gouzenko that he received no government pension from the time of his defection in 1946 until such pension was instituted by the government of the Right Hon. John G. Diefenbaker in 1962. The first part of my question as quoted by the McDonald commission was as follows:

What are all the reasons that a government pension was not given to Igor Gouzenko from 1946 up to the time the government of the Right Hon. John G. Diefenbaker took such action in 1962?

The commission report then proceeds to quote from the answer given by the solicitor general of the time, the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East (Mr. Allmand). It states in part "from 1946 to 1962 Mr. Gouzenko was looked after entirely by the Canadian government." Further on page 341 of the McDonald commission's third report the following very significant words appear:

● (1520)

We have reviewed the history of the matter carefully, as it is disclosed by RCMP files. The story, in almost every aspect, is a crystal clear one. It is not true that from 1946 to 1962 Mr. Gouzenko was looked after "entirely" by the Canadian government.

Clearly, Madam Speaker, falsified information was given to me as a member of this House. I realize, Madam Speaker, that I also must establish that a question of privilege can extend back to a previous session of a previous Parliament. I believe this is made clear both by rulings made by yourself and by your predecessor Speaker, Mr. Jerome. I also quote from the nineteenth edition of Erskine May, page 161, wherein it is

—a contempt committed against one Parliament may be punished by another—

I refer to certain references contained in Erskine May and, particularly, a ruling given by Mr. Speaker Jerome that clearly indicates, I believe, that I have a prima facie case of privilege. These references pertain to the giving of false information to this House, in this particular case by a cabinet minister.

It is clear from precedent and previous rulings that even though the false information may have been given to the House by the former solicitor general, without his knowing that it was false at the time, nevertheless a minister must assume responsibility for what he presents in the House which indeed may often have actually been drafted by others. In this regard I refer to page 966 of *Hansard* of November 9, 1978, where Speaker Jerome states as follows:

Nevertheless, it has been quite a generally accepted extension of that doctrine of ministerial responsibility that when serious dereliction of duty by an official of a minister takes place, the minister is expected either to assume responsibility for that in the House or, alternatively, to advise the House of the appropriate disciplinary measure which has been taken.

To sum up, Madam Speaker, I am alleging that a deliberate attempt was made to obstruct me in the performance of my duties to the extent that the minister's answer to question No.

2,332 was not drafted on precise statements of fact. The law of privilege in this regard is stated in Erskine May, page 136, nineteenth edition. This was quoted by Speaker Jerome in a favourable ruling on a question of privilege of a somewhat similar nature raised by the member for Durham-Northumberland (Mr. Lawrence) on November 9, 1978, as appearing on page 965 of *Hansard*:

It may be stated generally that any act or omission which obstructs or impedes either House of Parliament in the performance of its functions, or which obstructs or impedes any member or officer of such House in the discharge of his duty, or which has a tendency, directly or indirectly, to produce such results may be treated as a contempt—

Shortly thereafter, Madam Speaker, in Speaker Jerome's ruling the Chair again quoted from Erskine May as follows:

It is a breach of privilege to present or cause to be presented to either House or to committees of either House, forged, falsified or fabricated documents with intent to deceive such House or committees—

On December 6, 1978, Speaker Jerome ruled further in regard to the matter raised by the hon. member for Durham-Northumberland, and I quote this sentence:

Even beyond the precedents and the complex law of privilege, I cannot conceive that there is any one of us who would accept the argument that this House of Commons has no recourse in the face of such an attempt to obstruct by offering admittedly misleading information.

I, therefore, find a prima facie case of contempt against the House of Commons.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I contend that my privileges have been breached by falsified information presented to this House. Further examination of page 341 of the third report of the McDonald commission will note that not only was this the case but, also, the additional point that the answer as prepared by the officer in charge of the RCMP counterespionage branch was further falsified by others, publicly unknown at this time, before it was presented to the House of Commons by the minister.

I respectfully request, Madam Speaker, that you investigate this matter that I have just raised, including the precedents outlined in Erskine May and previous rulings by Mr. Speaker Jerome. If it is found that I have a prima facie case of privilege, I would reserve my right to move a motion that this matter be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Madam Speaker: I will take this matter under advisement. I gather from the statement which the hon. member made to me that I need to look into it at more length. In the light of what the hon. member stated in the House, I will examine the question and rule on it much later. Perhaps other hon. members would like to speak to the matter later, but I will take it under advisement.