

In relation to the actual quotations that I have given to you already with regard to certain witnesses appearing before a royal commission, obviously that is patently untrue. Obviously as well, it was perhaps cleverly and subtly designed to mislead me. Of that I do not think there can be any question or doubt whatsoever.

I merely say to you, sir, that in this context it does not matter whether the former solicitor general was misled by his officials. What is important to me—and, I hope, is important to all members of the House—is that I should be able, as an MP, both in and out of the House, to trust the word of a minister of the Crown on a critically and crucially important matter. We should be able to trust the word of a minister of the Crown. My argument is not with the RCMP; my argument is with the minister's word to me. His argument might be with his officials or with the RCMP, but that is his argument, his problem, not mine today in my submission to you. Mine is with him, and as an MP that is the only recourse I have. I cannot complain to him in this context that he might have incompetent, lying or negligent officials. That is not my argument today. My argument today is that if I, as an MP, cannot trust the word of a minister of the Crown in respect of a legitimate inquiry from a constituent of mine, where do I go? What are we here for or, more important, what is the minister here for?

This matter affects my responsibilities and actions in the House, and my submission to you, sir, is that in actual fact it did affect my subsequent actions in the House. This is not a matter exclusively for the inquiry sitting two blocks south of here day by day—there can be 47 royal commissions—but this is a particular matter relating to a deliberate and intentional act to mislead me, and subsequently my constituents, and therefore I submit to you that it is a matter which should be examined by the House since it affects us. It might or might not be a matter that is under the jurisdiction of a royal commission—that is irrelevant. The fact is that it affects my capabilities and responsibilities to my constituents. In fact, it might be no business whatsoever of a royal commission.

I just want to finish up my rather lengthy argument to you, sir. I appreciate your patience and tolerance in allowing me to go on this long.

The essence of my argument is that I was deliberately misled by a letter from a minister, possibly with his knowledge or possibly without it, I do not know, but from my point of view I was misled.

I note that on page 67 of the nineteenth edition of May's, privilege is defined as follows:

The distinctive mark of a privilege is its ancillary character. The privileges of parliament are rights which are "absolutely necessary for the due execution of its powers".

That is, parliament's powers.

They are enjoyed by individual members, because the House cannot perform its functions without unimpeded use of the services of its members; and by each House for the protection of its members and the vindication of its own authority and dignity.

Surely if anything inhibits the ability of a member of parliament to serve his constituents, it is the unwillingness or

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the inability of a minister of the Crown to provide him with truthful information when he writes to him or asks a question in the House. Surely it is the duty of the House to hold the executive accountable for its policies and actions. This right is also circumscribed by the executive's refusal to release large amounts of information necessary to any concept of accountability. We have had that problem before. What is left to the House if the executive is allowed to extend its prerogatives not only to the privilege of withholding information but also to the point of deliberately uttering falsehoods?

To support my contention that this letter offended my privileges as a member acting within the scope of his duties and protected by privilege, I would draw the attention of the Chair to page 88 of May, which states the following from a 1939 report of a Westminster committee on the Official Secrets Acts. By the way, sir, this is reproduced in our *Beauchesne*. The quotation reads:

Cases may easily be imagined of communications between one member and another or between a member and a minister, so closely related to some matter pending in, or expected to be brought before the House, that, although they do not take place in the chamber or a committee room, they form part of the business of the house, as, for example, where a member sends to a minister the draft of a question he is thinking of putting down, or shows it to another member with a view to obtaining advice as to the propriety of putting it down or as to the manner in which it should be framed.

• (1232)

I suggest to you, sir, the circumstances in the case I am proposing to you fall squarely within that type of case referred to in May, and with some favour, in our own *Beauchesne*. That particular opinion was supported by a report of the committee on privileges of the United Kingdom. In its fifth report of 1956-57 at paragraph 12, it reads as follows:

We adopt and follow the arguments and reasoning of the select committee of November 1939, and we are of the opinion that Mr. Strauss in writing to the Paymaster General on 8th February, 1957, directing his attention to matters of administration in the London area of the Nationalized Industry of Electricity and criticising the London Electricity Board was conducting or engaged in a "proceeding in parliament" and that in so doing he is protected by the privilege declared to belong to parliament by the Bill of Rights, 1688.

In other words, the committee said that even though that took place outside of the House, it affected the responsibilities, capabilities, and privileges of the House in such a manner that it was an actual breach of the privileges of the House.

Finally, sir, I draw your attention to page 141 of May, which reads 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—

And the following page which reads as follows:

The House may treat the making of a deliberately misleading statement as a contempt.

My proposition is that that obviously is extended. If there are forged, falsified or fabricated documents with intent to deceive the House or committees, obviously it means with intent to deceive a member of the House.

I realize many aspects of this matter are currently before the McDonald commission, but I feel obliged to raise it in the