

judge, are charges against another hon. member affecting that hon. member's independence and so on, that it is only proper to give notice of a motion—

Mr. DAVIN. I gave the hon. gentleman notice.

Mr. SPEAKER. I mean the regular notice. The Orders of the Day show no notice of motion to have been given. I thought, until the hon. gentleman came to what seemed to be personal charges that he was indulging in a general discussion of—

Mr. DAVIN. I will content myself with calling attention to—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order.

Mr. SPEAKER. I thought the hon. gentleman was indulging in a general discussion of the condition of affairs in Saskatchewan, and would conclude with a motion to adjourn. But I think he will see that if he makes a charge, as he seems to be doing, that that is a subject for notice of motion, and that a motion on that subject should follow.

Mr. DAVIN. I will content myself with calling the attention of the Government and the House to what is going on in Saskatchewan, and will personally make no charge whatever.

Mr. SPEAKER. But if the hon. gentleman allows a newspaper or any one else to make a charge through him, that will be the same thing. The hon. gentleman must not be the mouthpiece of any one in making a charge any more than he must make a charge himself without notice. He must assume the responsibility as the—

Mr. DAVIS (Saskatchewan). Mr. Speaker—

Mr. SPEAKER. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Davis) cannot interrupt.

Mr. DAVIN. Of course, I have no desire whatever to disobey or to attempt to disobey in any way any ruling of yours, and, if I speak, it is solely as to the point of order. I do not think, Mr. Speaker, that it is necessary to give notice if an hon. member seeks to call attention, for the behoof of the Government, for the behoof of this House, at the first moment when a serious state of things comes under his notice. It would be necessary, of course, to give notice if I was going to conclude with a motion to refer this matter to the Committee on Privileges and Elections. But I apprehend, Mr. Speaker, with great respect for your ruling, that it is not necessary to give notice, but that it is a matter of duty without notice at all, when a serious state of things like this comes to my notice, to rise at the very first moment in the House and call the attention of the House and the Government to it. Suppose, for instance—and I may argue the point of order—that some

Mr. SPEAKER.

wrong is done to the Prime Minister in this matter, is it not of the utmost importance to the country and to a man occupying his position that the earliest opportunity should be given him to deal with it and disavow it? For instance, here is a statement which I meet that a corrupt bargain has been made between the Government and certain persons in Saskatchewan. If there is no truth in that, if the Prime Minister is in a position to disavow it—

Mr. SPEAKER. I do not object at all to the hon. gentleman saying that a corrupt bargain has been made by the Government. That is not a personal matter exactly; it does not affect the independence of any hon. member of this House. But I still feel that the hon. gentleman is rather confusing the right that any hon. member has to get up and raise a question of privilege which affects himself with the raising of a question of privilege against an hon. member without notice, which, I think, cannot be allowed, at any rate, unless a case of great urgency has been shown to exist.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. The point that is now under your consideration, Mr. Speaker, is a very grave one indeed, and I should like to have the opportunity of stating that so far as my acquaintance with parliamentary practice goes, I think it has been the invariable practice in this House, when a grave charge affecting either an hon. member of the House or a member of the Government of this country has arisen, for an hon. member to draw the attention of the Government and of the House at the earliest possible moment to the matter, and the opportunity is given—which is most desirable in the interest of the character of the House and the Government—the hon. member who may be affected by that statement to make such explanations as perhaps may entirely dispose of the whole question. I think, Mr. Speaker, it is a very serious matter indeed to interpose when an hon. member is bringing forward a matter of such grave moment as is the matter now under consideration of the House, affecting so seriously the position of an hon. member on a very grave question, and the hon. member thus affected be prevented by closing a discussion from having an opportunity of making his explanation. I have very great respect for your ruling, Mr. Speaker, on any question; but I think the present question is one that requires to be very carefully considered before the House adopts the course indicated, that does not strike me to be either in the interest of the Government or of this House or especially of any member affected by statements so confidently made.

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. Laurier). Charges made against an hon. member of this House unfortunately have not been made for the first time, but the practice when we occupied seats on the other side of the House was, not to make such charges