

Question of Privilege

forced to sign that statement and that it is false. There is also another document somewhere, that I have seen myself and which is in the hands of the R.C.M.P. That one is signed by the instigator of the whole story who confessed that he had asked the first individual to sign a false statement against me. According to him it was a prominent political figure who asked him to make up that statement. The investigation is not up to me but to the R.C.M.P.

The R.C.M.P. also holds a statement sworn before an official of the superior court, in Montreal, and signed by Dr. Roch Deslauriers, which states that I have never directly or indirectly asked him for money.

Mr. Speaker, since that project had absolutely nothing to do with the federal administration, I deemed it advisable to resign from the post I held in the federal cabinet. I considered it my duty to clear my own name, without involving in any way the responsibility of my cabinet colleagues. Since the matter in dispute is a provincial one, and one which also concerns my constituency, today it is in my capacity as member for St. Jean-Iberville-Napierville and not as a minister that I can rise in this house to state with pride that never, in the course of my political career, in my own riding or elsewhere, have I done anything not in keeping with my duties as an honest servant of the people. I have decided to bring this whole matter completely into the open and this will be done in due course. My conscience is clear, and I am convinced that the results of the inquiry now in progress will bear me out. That is why I shall refrain from saying anything more for the time being. I will merely add, for the benefit of those who claim that my resignation will end my political career, that they do not know me. I will never capitulate under pressure of shameful intrigues.

Mr. Speaker, I shall conclude by saying that when, in the near future, the outcome of the various investigations are made public, it will become obvious that the disgusting schemes of those individuals who tried to attack the reputation of federal politicians have resulted in a dismal failure. I hope that those events will mark the end of a period of disparagement during which the reputation of our parliamentary institutions has suffered pretty badly. One thing is sure. The authors of those scandals will not get off scot-free. Our government is composed of honest men and the people of Canada have confidence in that government which has done

[Mr. Dupuis.]

such great things under our great Prime Minister.

[Text]

MR. MCILRAITH—COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION
OF ARREST OF MEMBER FOR LAPOINTE

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I should like to raise a question of privilege. On February 13, 1965, a number of newspapers carried stories which no doubt all hon. member have seen, describing the circumstances connected with the arrest of the hon. member for Lapointe (Mr. Grégoire) on the previous day on two warrants for traffic offences.

The substance of these stories related to the arrest of the hon. member while the house was in session and shortly after he had left the centre block of the parliament buildings. The stories also suggested that the police officers involved previously had been refused permission to make an arrest within the centre block.

Questions of the arrest of members of parliament in the past have been regarded as raising issues of the privileges of the house. The basis of such privileges, as Beauchesne in his third edition at page 30 of the introduction has pointed out, is the necessity of enabling members freely to attend to their duties in parliament. It is clear that the service of parliament is paramount to all other claims.

Because the circumstances of the arrest of the hon. member may involve problems of the extent of the privileges of parliament, it is desirable that the standing committee established to consider questions of privileges and elections be seized of this matter. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, if you rule that there is a prima facie question of privilege involved I propose to move, seconded by Mr. MacNaught, that the matter be referred to the standing committee on privileges and elections.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, on the same question of privilege. In view of the fact that a member of parliament was refused more than what was mentioned by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. McIlraith), namely his fundamental right to receive a warrant from the R.C.M.P. in both official languages of the country; also in view of the fact, as stated also by the President of the Privy Council, that the R.C.M.P. seems to have interfered with the privileges of a member of parliament by arresting him on