

With respect, I cannot accept the interesting suggestion that parliamentary privilege extends to senior officials, be they senior officials of Parliament or of government.

Privilege, as honourable Members know, is the sum of the special rights enjoyed by Members over and beyond the rights enjoyed by other citizens under the common law. Without going into further detail on the definition of parliamentary privilege, I think it should be noted that it has never been deemed to extend to officials or servants of Parliament.

The second aspect of this question is the interesting proposition advanced by the honourable Member for Peace River that it would be a breach of privilege to impede honourable Members in the discharge of their duties to deny the Auditor General adequate working facilities.

In the course of argument it was indicated that this is not a new complaint but has reference rather to a situation which is alleged to have obtained for some time. This, it seems to me, has to be viewed much more as a matter of administration than as one of parliamentary privilege.

In this respect, the complaint should be considered by way of substantive motion rather than under the guise of privilege. Alternatively, such grievances can be studied by an appropriate committee of the House, which is precisely the action which the House unanimously endorsed yesterday.

For these reasons, I have come to the conclusion that I cannot put this question to the House as one of *prima facie* case of breach of parliamentary privilege. I remind honourable Members that this is not a decision on the substance of the matter but one only of procedure, which is the limit of the Speaker's responsibility in such matters. In this respect, I refer honourable Members to a decision of Mr. Speaker Michener who, having refused to put a motion as one of privilege, concluded his ruling with the following words, which I believe apply to the present ruling.

The following quotation is from the *Journals* of June 19, 1959, at page 586: "In finding that a question of the privileges of the House is not *prima facie* involved in this motion, I am making a procedural decision the effect of which will not prevent the further discussion by the House of the matters in issue. The effect is to refuse precedence to this discussion but not to prevent it. No barrier is raised to the presentation of this matter under different circumstances on another occasion. For example, the subject matter could be brought before the House as an amendment to the next motion to go into Supply."

These words of a learned and distinguished former Speaker apply very well to the present situation.

Mr. Macdonald, a Member of the Queen's Privy Council, laid upon the Table,—Copies of correspondence dated February 25 and March 8, 1972, exchanged between the

Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Premier of the Province of Alberta, with regard to the relationship between the two governments in energy policy matters.—Sessional Paper No. 284-5/75.

The Order being read for the consideration of the Business of Supply;

Pursuant to Standing Order 58, Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre), moved,—That this House condemns the government for the disastrous failure of its regional development programmes to make any progress in eliminating regional disparities and, in particular, condemns the government for the lack of planning or strategy in its programmes, for its total reliance on give-away grants to private corporations, most of them foreign owned, for the senseless practice of transplanting unemployment by assisting plants in one location while similar plants are being closed in another location and for the wasteful expenditure of large sums of public funds without appreciable results in jobs and economic development in the disadvantaged areas of Canada.

After debate thereon, proceedings on the motion expired.

Changes in Committee Membership

Notice having been filed with the Clerk of the House pursuant to Standing Order 65(4)(b), membership of Committees was amended as follows:

Mr. Flemming for Mr. MacKay on the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs.

Mr. Thomson (Battleford-Kindersley) for Mr. Barnett on the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Mr. Knowles (Norfolk-Haldimand) for Mr. Peddle on the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates.

Mr. Nystrom for Mr. Peters on the Standing Committee on Regional Development.

Returns and Reports Deposited with the Clerk of the House

The following papers having been deposited with the Clerk of the House were laid upon the Table pursuant to Standing Order 41(1), namely:

By Mr. Marchand, a Member of the Queen's Privy Council,—Report on the Operation of the Regional De-