

which I am prepared to hear discussion, if there is any, and I will withhold my decision until after I have heard some discussion. I noted that the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) was seeking the floor. I do not know whether it was for that purpose or not.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, as usual, I think your observations are correct inasmuch as normally if a question of privilege is to be raised and if a motion is to be moved, notice would have to be given in advance of the sitting. We find now that the Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Goyer) brings himself before this House allegedly on a question of privilege with the idea of giving his version of the situation to this House. When he came before the House on a question of privilege we would have expected that if he were intending to rise on a question of privilege and if he were legitimately concerned about clearing his name and the reputation of the RCMP, he would accompany that statement with a motion to have the matter referred to the appropriate committee. Not having done that, he has abused the procedures of this House.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: He has abused the procedures of this House by not bringing that forward, and that only shows the speciousness with which he attends this House to make a statement based on his own selective memory. So I think it is very appropriate, in view of the fact that we would have expected a motion to follow a question of privilege which was legitimate, if it was legitimate, for the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) to move his motion on a fresh item of privilege at the first opportunity which arose during the course of debate.

Under those circumstances I think it is quite proper for an hon. member to do so. It is only where a matter is to be brought up at a subsequent sitting and after the event that the requirement is that notice be given with respect to a matter which took place on a preceding day. However, this happened just now. We now find after the minister has spoken that he does not intend to make a reference to a committee, to allow hon. members of this House to investigate any documentation or to examine in the course of committee hearings any people who were involved either as officials or senior officials of the RCMP in order to get a complete story and a proper perspective and, indeed, to have the benefit of the information, advice or testimony of any person who may be able to shed light on this particular matter.

• (1600)

With all due respect, I would think the motion is most appropriate at this time. It highlights and underlines the fact that the Minister of Supply and Services is not the least bit interested in shedding light on the matter.

Mr. Speaker: I think, in the interests of more enlightened discussion, I can expose one or two other problems about the matter. I am afraid it is not just a simple matter of procedure of notice of the motion. I do not think there has been a

Privilege—Mr. Goyer

previous occasion when one member has moved that the conduct of another member be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections. What is involved here is procedure, but we have a more detailed and deeper problem than that, namely, whether the matter is one of privilege or one that has to be argued.

Traditionally, when a member of this House seeks to have his own conduct reviewed by a standing committee of the House, obviously the standard of the question of privilege is relaxed somewhat because any member who seeks that is generally granted it. To extend that to a situation in which one member seeks to have the conduct of another member investigated by a committee, however, means that a number of severe standards come into play. It will not fall simply on a matter of notice, but becomes a substantive matter of whether it qualifies as a question of privilege. It would be curious to find that no member could have moved the motion yesterday or a week ago to refer the conduct of the Minister of Supply and Services to the committee on the question of privilege, but that it could be done now after the minister has made a statement. I am not sure about that, but I am prepared to listen to argument.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I find the turn of events rather surprising. Yesterday the Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Goyer) was almost bullied by members of the opposition who were asking him to get up in the House and clear his name. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark), both in the House and outside the House, called upon the minister to make a statement and to subject himself to questioning. The hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker) and the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent) inferred in their comments yesterday—

Mr. Broadbent: Implied.

Mr. MacEachen: —that there was a matter of privilege at stake and that the minister ought to take advantage of it, in the words of the deputy House leader on the other side, “to clear his name.”

Mr. Hnatyshyn: As a minimum.

Mr. MacEachen: Then, the minister having risen and having made a statement—

Mr. Diefenbaker: And having not cleared his name.

Mr. MacEachen: The right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) says, “Having not cleared his name”. I will return to that a little later. The Minister of Supply and Services made his statement and then opened himself to questions by hon. members opposite. The Leader of the Opposition came to bat, and what happened? He struck out!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEachen: One after the other, all members of the opposition were given the opportunity to question the minister, and he answered their questions. The right hon. member for