

*Privilege*

do not know if we have made any progress at all. But, let us try to resolve this.

First, I will say there is no question that in terms of dealing with this piece of legislation, the Parliament of Canada Act and revisions to it, Bill C-79, I have heard time and time again that we all want to resolve it, so let us get on and resolve it. I pledge on behalf of my colleagues a willingness and a keenness to do that. We will get on with it. The same from the Official Opposition, and I suspect from the government benches as well. So, let us set that aside. We will deal with that as expeditiously and as quickly as possible. It is a difficult task, and it is already in process, I understand.

The other matter is these personal accusations. I never referred to my hon. friend from Calgary West, as a matter of fact, I did not even know the name of his riding, so I could not have done that very well. I had concerns about what appeared to be what the Conservatives are doing on a committee. Those are my public comments, the Conservatives on the committee. It was not non-political or non-partisan, the overwhelming majority were Conservatives, some Liberals, and other New Democrats.

**Mr. Hawkes:** That's not true.

**Mr. Riis:** Well, Mr. Speaker, in other words, the parties were not equally represented. The largest group was from the Conservative Party. So, I presume that is why I said it seemed like the Conservatives were doing this because the two of the three opposition parties were working together.

• (1620 )

Set that aside, Mr. Speaker. Surely to goodness we can deal with that.

On the other matter of personal attacks, all I said is that I want an opportunity to respond to what I perceive to be personal attacks in terms of my integrity in my work as a member of Parliament, in the House, in committee, and beyond.

Let us drop this, Mr. Speaker. If my hon. friend wishes to retract the allegations, we will leave it and get on with the matter of C-79. If he does not want to retract what are personal attacks, then I do not see any way around it. He must go on and make the accusations, and I will respond, and then in your judgment you will decide whether there is a *prima facie* case of privilege. If you do,

then it goes on to a vote; if you do not, that is the end of it.

I appeal to my hon. friend. For people watching this, what are they thinking? For people who have to sit through attacks and counter-attacks back and forth, is this what the House of Commons has become? I appeal to my hon. friend. Simply withdraw the allegations to allow us to get on to do the work that, as members of Parliament, we were elected to do.

**Mr. Hawkes:** Mr. Speaker, I am searching for the allegations the member made in the House on October 11, and I want to ask him if he will withdraw those first. Can I read them, Mr. Speaker, so that all Canadians can understand them?

**Mr. Speaker:** Just a moment. I will hear them if I have to.

Both members, of course, could rise in the House and say that, if anything they said has caused distress to the other and are unfair allegations, they would wish that they were withdrawn and that they will get on with the business of trying to work together, as in fact they have to do given their positions on committees and on the Board of Internal Economy. That would resolve the matter. It would not be that difficult, but it is not for me to say what hon. members are prepared to do.

In the interest of not tearing this place apart hour after hour with allegations and cross-allegations, denunciations, and other things, that is clearly an option. It might be the most sensible thing to do, but that is up to both hon. members and their colleagues.

In the meantime, I am getting to the point where I feel that the tentative offer of the member for Calgary West is not being acted upon for whatever reason at the moment and to discuss whether or not that offer could be taken up, which is simply to adjourn this matter for the moment, with all rights reserved, and the two hon. members meet again either in the Speaker's Chambers or by themselves, to see if there is some honourable way to resolve this.

That is the issue that I want answered and, if it is not possible to do that, then I think both hon. members will have to say it is not possible. We will then revert to the question of privilege and we will probably have to listen to a great deal of debate on who said what to whom and about whom, but that is what happens in questions of privilege. Ultimately, I will have to decide whether there is a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege. If I do, I put it