

*Grain Handling at Quebec*

marked by him with an asterisk and shall be placed by the clerk on the order paper above "Notices of Motions" under the heading "Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers." All such notices when called shall be forthwith disposed of; but if on any such motion a debate be desired, it shall be transferred by the clerk to the order of Notices of Motions.

First, if my hon. friend from East Kootenay wishes the production of any letter or papers it must not be done by discussing a question of privilege and giving to my right hon. friend himself (Mr. Bennett) an opportunity to make remarks which he would not have the right to do on Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers, because if a debate ensued that motion would have to be transferred to the Notices of Motions and to await its opportunity to be discussed.

Mr. BENNETT: The question of privilege I was discussing was not that.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): I will come to the other question of privilege, but first I will quote the rules. Paragraph 433 of Beauchesne says:

Papers are laid before the house in pursuance of

- (1) Provisions of an act of parliament;

That is not this case.

- (2) An order of the house;

That would be the only way, I suggest, to have the production of that paper, but it has not been done.

- (3) An address to the crown.

That was not done in this case.

- (4) The command of the crown;
- (5) Standing orders of the house.

These are the five cases in which papers have to be laid on the table when requested.

Mr. BENNETT: This involves a question of rates, and therefore would have to be laid before the house.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): Well, this is not the time to discuss that. If my hon. friend wants the papers produced he has to ask for them in the regular way, not simply by asking a question about a certain letter which he alleges to have been sent and which the Minister of Transport says he has never seen. My hon. friend resorts to the other rule, that if a minister of the crown makes use of a document he has to table that document. But when did the Minister of Transport make use of that document? The hon. member for Kootenay East alleges a document, speaks about it; the Minister of Transport says he

[Mr. E. Lapointe.]

has not seen it. I cannot see how my right hon. friend can work himself into a state of fury because this paper has not been tabled, especially when it is not even in the possession of the Minister of Transport. Time and again, not only when a question is asked but on motions for production of papers, when they relate to papers in the hands of a commission, such as the harbours board, the answer is that the house might carry the motion, but that of course it would be forwarded to the proper authorities in order to ascertain whether the document in question can be produced and filed. We may be guilty of many reprehensible things, but if I never have anything more on my conscience as a public man than this alleged letter, addressed by someone to a member of the harbours board, which the Minister of Transport has never seen—

Mr. BENNETT: He talks about it, though.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): I am afraid the next Conservative convention will not find material there to build a platform on.

Mr. STEVENS: The matter cannot be disposed of in that way—

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the hon. member speaking on now?

Mr. STEVENS: I am speaking to a question of privilege and rights, in view of the attitude of the government.

On May 6 I submitted in the proper way certain questions. On May 18 these questions were passed as an order for return. I do not know why that should have been done, but it was asked by the government and the house concurred. The return simply answered the word "no" to five of the questions. One of those questions had to do with a special agreement with Louis Dreyfus and Company regarding the handling of grain. I ask the house and the government to bear in mind that that question was asked on May 6. Today the minister gave a lengthy verbal answer to that question. He referred to the letter as having been written by a member of the national harbours board to the Dreyfus company; but, he said, as nothing happened as a result of that letter, there is no object in tabling it. Then he added, "I will now table an order in council amending the grain charges." I notice that this order is effective May 21, and was amended by P.C. 1115 dated May 18, a considerable time after the question I asked the minister, and fully a month after the letter was written by the member of the harbours board to Mr. Kaiser of the Dreyfus company.