

Question of Privilege

if a case of this kind occurs again outside the house, I shall take the matter to the courts myself.

Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, in connection with this matter that has arisen, I think the house must first look at the question that is before it. This is not an allegation concerning a statement made in the house, and the quotation which the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre has read, and the various authorities I have been able to look up in the very few minutes we have had, refer only to statements made in the house on which questions of privilege arise.

The hon. member who raised the question stated that he was merely quoting from press reports. I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that is actually what we are now attempting to discuss, and it is very difficult if not impossible to discuss a matter which is subject only to press reports and which has been raised on press reports. If it had been a statement made in the house there would be a question of privilege which could be raised.

Some hon. Members: Deny it.

Mr. Aiken: I do not know what all the heat is being raised about on my left. Surely we can discuss this matter in some sensible manner. The right hon. Leader of the Opposition stated that no motives were imputed in the statement he made last night and that no motives were imputed here in the house. I do not think we can take up this question of privilege on the information that is before us at this time.

Mr. Speaker: I do not think it is unfair to say that the Chair does appreciate the position it is in at the moment. It is a very delicate one, but nevertheless the Chair has its duty to perform.

I would like to point out that if hon. members will refer to page 133 of May's Parliamentary Practice, sixteenth edition and edited by Sir Gilbert Campion, they will find that:

Alleged breaches of privileges or contempts committed out of the house or in the precincts of the house but not in its actual view may be brought to the notice of the house (1) by a complaint from a member—

—and various other examples are given; by communications, etc. Therefore I do think the hon. member is right in bringing this to the attention of the house.

While it is not exactly on the point may I refer to citation 134 of Beauchesne's parliamentary rules, fourth edition, paragraph 2:

In the House of Commons a member will not be permitted by the Speaker to indulge in any reflections on the house itself as a political institution; or to impute to any member or members unworthy motives for their actions in a particular case; or to use any profane or indecent language; or to question the acknowledged and undoubted powers of the house; or to reflect upon, argue against or in any manner call in question the past acts and proceedings of the house, or to speak in abusive and disrespectful terms of an act of parliament.

This is not precisely on the point but it does seem to me to give me general directions. I have obtained a copy of the words which I understand were used. They are in a quotation published in this afternoon's *Ottawa Journal* also, and if they are as stated it does seem to me that the right hon. member, who must take his responsibility, of course, has gone too far.

This afternoon the right hon. member mentioned the fact that he was against a certain pay increase. Well, that is his privilege, to be for or against; but we are not discussing whether he was for or against the pay increase. We are discussing the words which were used, and the words in the quotation which I have before me are:

"not that I love the red ensign less, but \$18,000 more."

—and these are applied to three parties in this house. Further the quotation reads:

—the Prime Minister knows he stands in no danger from "his allies"—the Social Credit, Creditist and New Democratic parties—because the government voted M.P.s a pay increase to \$18,000 a year. "It has a wonderful effect on third party support."

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I understand, as do all hon. members, that at political meetings emotions run sometimes cold, sometimes hot and sometimes too hot. Statements are made on occasion in the enthusiasm of the moment which carry the orator or speaker or guest of honour along, and he is sometimes carried away. But if those words were used I must come to the conclusion that they are very serious words if they are to be applied to every member of the house. They affect every member of the house, and in the circumstances I am going to make a personal appeal to the right hon. the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw those words or take other steps which will amount to a withdrawal or an apology to the house. I appeal to him to help us out of a very difficult situation at the moment.