

Oral Questions

Mr. Reilly: I have been called a joker for raising this issue, but this farceur, seconded by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), moves that the subject matter of my question of privilege be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member has indicated that this is substantially, or essentially, to use his word, the same matter as he raised last Friday. Since I received notice of the motion from the hon. member, I had thought that this might provide an opportunity for the Chair, for my own benefit and the benefit of hon. members generally, to review the practice relating to parliamentary privilege. Perhaps this is not the occasion and I should wait for another opportunity to do so.

I really feel that the hon. member raised this matter last Friday. There was a ruling made upon it at that time. He now brings it before the House a second time. In fact, I think it was raised a second time in the debate yesterday by the hon. member, so he now comes before the House a third time and tries to revive the matter by way of a question of privilege.

The hon. member knows that, essentially, parliamentary privilege is raised in the House for the purpose of asking that a debate take place giving priority to a specific motion; in other words, the matter is so important that it should take precedence over other business that the House is supposed to consider on a certain day. The proposition of the hon. member in this instance is that we should debate the motion he has proposed and then it would be up to the House to determine whether the matter should be referred to a committee as he suggests, seconded by the hon. member for Peace River.

My ruling is that the matter was considered last Friday and a ruling was made then. I suggest to the hon. member that it is not sufficient to come back to the House and say new evidence has been unearthed, so that he may raise the matter a second or perhaps a third time by way of privilege. I have made a ruling, and I do not consider that the motion should be put to the House for debate at the present time.

Having said all this, I certainly do not suggest that this is not an important matter. I do consider that it is a very important matter and one which ought to be of interest to hon. members. But that type of question can indeed be discussed in many ways in the House, either in the Speech from the Throne debate or by way of private member's motion. I repeat that it can be considered by the House and debated by hon. members in so many ways other than a question of privilege which would take priority over all other business of the House in this sitting.

I am not ruling that it is not an important matter, that it is not of interest to hon. members, but simply that it should not be debated at this time by way of a question of parliamentary privilege.

[Mr. Reilly.]

[Translation]

MR. BEAUDOIN—PROTESTS RESPECTING CALENDAR PUBLISHED BY POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege concerning a personal attack on the feelings of the French Canadian members and the entire population, especially in Quebec as a result of the publication of a nice red calendar of which I recently received a copy from the Post Office Department.

Mr. Speaker, I bitterly note that St. Valentine, St. Patrick, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Dominion Day, Thanksgiving Day and Remembrance Day are indicated, even Hallow'een. But the feast-day of French Canadians recognized by the House a few years ago and which is always observed on June 24, that is St. John the Baptist, does not appear thereon.

Mr. Speaker, I raise a question of privilege because my rights as a French Canadian and Member of Parliament are slighted by this unfortunate omission of the Post Office Department, and I move, seconded by the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert):

That the said calendar of the Post Office Department ceases to be circulated and a new calendar be printed so as to take into account these representations in order to truly respect all cultural groups in Canada.

Mr. Speaker: With the greatest respect, I suggest to the hon. member for Richmond that his motion is one of substance much more than a question of privilege. He suggests that his privileges as a Member of Parliament have been slighted in the circumstances that he refers to. I cannot accept this claim. Other prerogatives or privileges of the hon. member may perhaps have been slighted, but I do not feel that the said motion can be submitted to the House under the Standing Order concerning breaches of parliamentary privileges.

I suggest to the hon. member, somewhat like I did to the hon. member for Ottawa West (Mr. Reilly) a moment ago, that even if this question is of interest to all members of the House, it could be considered under other circumstances rather than by way of a question of privilege.

[English]

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

ENERGY

OIL PRICE INCREASES—POSITION OF GOVERNMENT—
NATIONAL ENERGY POLICY

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the appropriate minister whether it be the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs or the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of the increase in oil prices announced by a couple of companies and in view of the significance of these increases for the national economy