

Privilege—Mr. Waddell

Mr. Clark: I know now why the New Democratic Party are raising these accusations, not simply in the House of Commons but in speeches the hon. member for Oshawa made in Winnipeg recently, in speeches he made across the country, and in Vancouver. This occurs at a time when the government has introduced an energy policy and a constitutional policy both of which can deeply divide the country, and at a time when there are also very serious economic problems which are causing hardship across the country. But the Leader of the New Democratic Party does not attack the constitutional provisions, the economic situation of the country or the energy policy of the government. Instead, he attacks the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada.

• (1550)

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark: He applauds that now. His party attacks us, not on the basis of the policies which we have put forward, but by imputing motives to members of my party, by suggesting that they are less than loyal to Canada than members of the New Democratic Party. The NDP members do not attack us on the merits of what we have proposed or on the merits of our appeal to the people of western Canada to find their future within this larger country, but as separatists.

That party has attacked us as separatists, not because there is something in the record of the performance of the Progressive Conservative Party, but to draw attention away from the behaviour of the New Democratic Party and the way in which the members of that party have betrayed the electors who sent them here to stand against the Liberal party. Many of their constituents have become alarmed to find the members of the New Democratic Party hopping into league, hopping into liaison or hopping into bed with the Liberals they were elected to oppose.

The Leader of the New Democratic Party talked about his campaign in the province of Quebec against the forces of separatism. I give him the fact that he was there, but his was the only national party which refused to join the No campaign against separatism. His was the only party in Canada which turned its back on Claude Ryan because—

Mr. Broadbent: Who was in bed with the Liberals then, Joe?

Mr. Nielsen: We were in bed with Canada.

Mr. Clark: They were afraid to take the unequivocal kind of stand for Canada and for federalism which was taken at that time by the Liberal party and the Progressive Conservative Party. Now that party is doing everything it can, in every public forum it can find, to try to turn attention away from the fact that it joined in support of the Liberal constitution, a position which is driving western Canadians to consider leaving this country, and which is described as civilized by the Leader of the New Democratic Party.

I do not consider a measure which drives people of my country to consider leaving my country a civilized measure,

and I do not wonder at all at the fact that members of the New Democratic Party are so embarrassed about their own behaviour that they are trying to create false issues by calling into question the dedication to Canada of other members of this House of Commons.

Let me say one thing, Madam Speaker, about the sources and the cause of separatism, and the anger and frustration of those in western Canada. I would hope that members of Parliament, instead of accusing others of separatism because they report reality which is disturbing in one region of our country, before the word separatism leaps to their lips would do themselves and the country the favour of getting out of a part of the country where perhaps separatism is not a dynamic and growing force and of visiting western Canada to determine for themselves the level of anger and frustration which is growing there and which is being provoked there by the positions taken by the government on the constitution, energy, and other areas, and which are supported in such a Pavlovian way by the New Democratic Party.

I have fought separatism in Quebec and in western Canada, and I am fighting it now because it is a very dangerous and real problem. We do not solve the sources of separatism by making false accusations in this House of Commons about members of this House. We solve the danger and the prospect of separatism by recognizing how real that danger is in western Canada today and by paying heed, not casting scorn, on those members of Parliament who have the courage, honesty and dedication to their country to stand up in whatever forum to describe the real nature of the problem which is growing there.

If separatism is allowed to go unaddressed, it will grow into dimensions which will be very dangerous to this country. This is not a time to slander people who fight separatism in western Canada by offering alternatives to those Canadians in that region who are frustrated. It is not a time to slander members of this House or citizens in western Canada who are offering alternatives to the frustrated citizenry of that region who are now allowing their emotions to find outlet in movements which would take them outside this country. The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway has reason to worry about the reputation of his party, but he has no reason at all to cast that kind of slander upon myself or upon my colleagues in this House of Commons.

Madam Speaker: I have heard all the arguments and the definitions of McCarthyism and of the aspersions that might have derived from the whole discussion on separatism in western Canada. I will cut off the debate now, look into the interventions, and rule on the question of privilege later.

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POINT OF ORDER

MR. NIELSEN—PROCEDURE GOVERNING S.O. 43 MOTIONS

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, my point of order relates to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of