

No. 115

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OF CANADA

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, APRIL 20, 1971

2.00 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS

RULING BY MR. SPEAKER

MR. SPEAKER: I have listened with much interest and attention to the honourable Member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin). I do not wish to suggest that no reply should be made by someone on behalf of the government in respect of the honourable Member's question of privilege, but in view of the prescription of the new rules the Chair has had an opportunity to give the matter serious thought, and to look into the precedents and to consider the background of the subject. Therefore I believe I would be in a position now to give my view rightly or wrongly. I can assure the honourable Members, however, that the conclusion to which I have come has been reached after listening very attentively to the honourable Member and particularly after considering the matter since yesterday when it was first raised by the honourable Member for Peace River.

As I have said the honourable Member, according to the provisions of Section (2) of Standing Order 17 has given notice to the Chair of his intention to raise the question of privilege he has now stated to the House. In his written notice, the honourable gentleman stated that it was his intention to raise the same issue in relation to which he endeavoured to propose a motion during yesterday's sitting. That point may not be material at

this time but I do suggest to the honourable Member that what he raises today is a new and much broader question than the one he raised yesterday. In the notice given by the honourable Member it is stated: "The issue involved of course is the breach of privilege involved in the extent to which there is likely to be intimidation of Members of Parliament to the extent to which they are subjected to scrutiny and inspection, and have records kept of them in their capacity as Members of Parliament by the RCMP or others on behalf of the government."

This morning I had occasion to look back over the records of this House beginning with the year 1946 and I find that the question of alleged dossiers on Members of Parliament as such has been raised on a number of occasions. I might say even that it has been raised regularly and that there are many citations or quotations which honourable Members might want me to bring to their attention. In particular I might refer honourable Members to *Hansard* for July 5, 1946, the first year in which my search began, at page 3201 when the then Minister of Justice stated in part: The honourable Member also asks if there are any dossiers on Members of Parliament. There are no dossiers on Members of Parliament as such.