

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

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**Thursday, October 23, 1964**

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

### PRIVILEGE

**MR. MACINNIS—PRESS RELEASE RESPECTING  
FLAG COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS**

**Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton South):** I rise on a question of privilege. Earlier, Mr. Speaker, I spoke to you about two questions of privilege I wished to raise, and it was agreed that because of the short sitting hours on Wednesday one of them should be brought forward at ten o'clock.

However, the question I wish to raise at this time affects all members of the house, the integrity of each and every member in relation to the tasks they assume when serving this house. It is based on a press release, prior to the report of the flag committee, which was issued in the name of one of the hon. members of that committee. I feel this constitutes an obvious violation of the duty which this committee took upon itself when meeting in camera, to withhold any and all information which might develop in the course of those meetings.

This press release is a deliberate violation of that undertaking. It is a disgraceful performance, reflecting on every member of this house who undertakes to do a job which is assigned to him by the house. This release to the press is, without doubt, one which was prepared well in advance, and I cannot understand how any such detailed report could have been prepared without the prior knowledge and consent of at least one or two of the hon. member's colleagues. The whole procedure following developments within the flag committee has taken on, with this release, the aspect of deliberate plants throughout these hearings, plants that are put before the Canadian people as the choice of the flag committee, which nevertheless in my opinion, now confirmed by this report, were a deliberate move—I do not think necessarily the workings of one man—on the part of the government to imply to the people of Canada that this was being brought about by efforts on the part of the flag committee. The report that the A.Y. Jackson flag had been accepted

as the national flag, and other similar reports, followed by this particular report, certainly convince me that everything that has been done within that committee has been done deliberately by the government, and this release would support that contention.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, on the question of privilege—

**Mr. Horner (Acadia):** How much did he get paid for the article?

**Mr. Pearson:** —the remark by the hon. member that everything that was done in that committee by the Liberal members was done under the instructions of the government, or under any pressure from the government, is 100 per cent, completely false.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**An hon. Member:** How much was he paid?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Let us get on with the business before the house.

**Mr. Grant Deachman (Vancouver Quadra):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of personal privilege. Reference was made a moment ago by the hon. gentleman opposite to a story released in the paper today, which indeed I did write. I prepared it in the committee this morning. I can assure the house that it was not prepared with any help from any other member, or indeed with the knowledge of any other member; and I did so knowing or expecting that the papers would be released later this day, after the report had been filed.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Deachman:** If I have caused any embarrassment to the Chair I do indeed humbly apologize.

**Mr. Bell:** You embarrassed the government.

**Mr. Lambert:** It is still a lousy trick.

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, may I also rise on a question of privilege. The hon. gentleman has stated that this article was prepared this morning. It is interesting to note that it has been copyrighted, so that certainly there has been fast action since the committee met this morning.