

Mr. SUTHERLAND (North Oxford): What are you trying to do—start a rebellion?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I want to prevent a rebellion; I want to protect the honour of the crown; I want to prevent the name of the crown—

Mr. CAHAN: I rise to a point of order I submit, Mr. Speaker, that under the rules and practices of this House any member has a right to state a matter of privilege, but having stated the matter of privilege, if further proceedings are to be taken thereon he must, from his seat in the House, make a motion presenting a clear issue to the House for debate. Such an issue has not been presented to the House; full opportunity has been given to hon. gentlemen who wished to state their question of privilege, and I submit that further debate is out of order unless a motion is made on the issue of privilege, upon which further debate may take place and the decision of the House be given.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question of privilege affects collectively the members of this House of Commons, and may be debated by all members. But as I said a moment ago I expect that this long debate—

Mr. CANNON: Are you giving your decision?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr. CANNON: I would like to speak to the point of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is rather late.

Mr. CANNON: It is not late. Here is a very important question—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. gentleman is in order.

Mr. CANNON: This is a very important question, the most important matter discussed since the opening of the session. Hon. gentlemen opposite say the debate has lasted too long; it started at two o'clock this afternoon and it is now shortly after five o'clock. We heard gentlemen speaking for two months on trifling matters, and they were never called to order by the Chair.

Mr. CAHAN: There was a motion before the House.

Mr. CANNON: There need not be a motion; the rule is well known. Bourinot, who is quoted so often here, is very explicit in the matter. This question of privilege is

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

one which interests every member of the House, and every member has a right to speak on it. If any member decides to move a motion he will do so when he so decides.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is what I was going to say when the hon. gentleman preceded me.

Mr. ELLIOTT: Might I be permitted to add just a word before this decision is given. At page 302 of Bourinot I think exactly this point is touched, as follows:

Questions of privilege may always be considered in either house without the notice necessary in the case of motions generally.

And at page 303 I find the following:

In the Canadian House, questions of privilege take a wide range, but it may be stated in general terms that they refer to all matters affecting the rights and immunities of the House collectively, or to the position and conduct of members in their representative character.

Mr. SPEAKER: It agrees exactly with what I said at the beginning of this discussion. I have no ruling to give. I simply suggested that there is a question of privilege that affects collectively the House of Commons, but that the point of privilege having been stated clearly and unmistakably, and the answer of the ministers having been made, the debate should now come to an end. Certainly every member is entitled to speak on the question as it affects collectively the House of Commons, but I do not see the necessity of prolonging unduly the debate, unless a motion is put in concrete form dealing with the particular issue raised by the hon. member for Quebec East (Mr. Lapointe).

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I shall not take up much further time. I was saying when the question was raised that hon. gentlemen opposite had stated to this parliament that they were advising His Excellency because of an oath which they had taken as members of the Privy Council. I have drawn attention to the circumstance that that oath obliges them to have great regard for anything and everything which in any particular may affect the crown, and I am contending that their action in attempting to carry on and continuing to sit on the treasury benches, as they are doing at the present time, is an action which is imperilling in a more far-reaching way, I imagine, than they contemplate, the position of the representative of the crown in this country, and I submit that they can perform no finer act on this day on which we enter upon the sixtieth anniversary of our Dominion than to resolve, however difficult it may be for them so to do, that they will make it their first duty to see that the representative of the king in this country