

No. 179

# JOURNALS

OF THE

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

OF CANADA

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1971

2.00 o'clock p.m.

### PRAYERS

A question of privilege having been raised by the honourable Member for York South (Mr. Lewis), with respect to the provisions of the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act;

### RULING BY MR. SPEAKER

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for York South (Mr. Lewis) has given the Chair the required notice of his intention to raise this matter by way of a question of privilege. This as usual has given me the occasion to think again about the very important issues which lie behind the matter raised by the honourable Member for York South. It is not the first time that this matter is raised for the consideration of the Chair. The honourable Member for York South himself has referred to the many instances when during the last two weeks or so, indeed since the opening of this session, the matter has been brought before me for consideration in questions which were raised on the first day by a number of honourable Members, in motions which were made subsequently, in an adjournment motion, and in a submission that the matter should be considered by way of breach of parliamentary privilege, and also by way of impeachment of certain members of the government. This

of course has given the Chair several opportunities to reflect on all aspects of this very serious matter.

With respect I suggest to the honourable Member that it is very difficult for the Speaker, who is required to interpret and administer the rules and procedures of this House, the Standing Orders of the House and the precedents by which it must function, to say that the situation now exists where the Chair must disregard or disobey those rules, I forget the exact words of the honourable Member. But his suggestion is that the time has come for the Chair to ignore our procedural precedents. I suggest that the honourable Member is asking a great deal of the Chair.

It seems to me that when this matter was raised originally by way of a question of privilege I indicated to honourable Members what the precedents were and under what conditions the matter might be brought for consideration by a committee under the guise of a question of privilege. If I remember well, I quoted the well known precedent going back to the days of Mr. Speaker Michener when a similar matter was brought before the House and the rule was set down by the then Speaker as to what procedure was to be followed to have the conduct of a Minister or Ministers impugned and considered by a committee.