

Privilege—Mr. Graydon

until Wednesday next at three o'clock to withdraw it; otherwise I shall ask the Chair to have the reporter summoned before the bar of the House of Commons.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has made a request of me that I should do something in connection with the *Montreal Gazette*. I have no power or control over the *Montreal Gazette* or any comments it may make.

MR. GRAYDON—REFERENCE TO EDITORIAL IN THE TORONTO "GLOBE AND MAIL"

On the orders of the day:

Mr. GORDON GRAYDON (Leader of the Opposition): I rise to a question of privilege based upon an editorial appearing in to-day's issue of the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, which reflects upon His Majesty's Loyal Opposition and myself as leader. The editorial, among other things, says that:

Last week Doctor W. J. Edmonston Scott, M.A., who served at Ottawa as a censor in languages of central and western Europe from 1939 to 1943, supplied in a letter published in this newspaper definite confirmation of the validity of its charges about the government's scandalously inquisitorial abuse of the powers of censorship conferred upon it by the War Measures Act. Doctor Scott did not merely give general support to our allegations, but he provided very damning evidence to justify them by quoting a special memorandum, dated May 1, 1942, which was issued to examiners, and ran as follows:

"All letters observed in the mails containing information regarding women's political activities in all parts of the world and women's activities in connection with post-war reconstruction should be specially submitted to this office and the file reference C.11292-38 quoted."

No denial has been made of this allegation of Doctor Scott, and presumably no denial is possible. It is so disturbing that even a staunch supporter of the government like the *Winnipeg Free Press* has been moved to describe it as a gross abuse of the powers of censorship, upon which the fullest possible light should be directed, and to demand that the Minister of National War Services, who is responsible for the censorship, should be cross-examined in great detail about the scope of its operations.

If a parliamentary opposition has one duty more compelling than another, it is to act as a vigilant watchdog against all unwarranted governmental assaults upon fundamental principles of liberty. But, so far, from the opposition benches not even a whisper of protest has been heard against this proved assault. All the opposition groups have a measure of culpability in the matter, as any of their members could have raised the issue. But a special degree of blame for a deplorable laxity must attach to Mr. Graydon, because the leader of the official opposition has by tradition a special responsibility for bringing a government to book for such arrogant abuse of its powers as has been revealed, especially when they strike at the roots of personal liberties. He should have lost no time in proceeding to cross-examine the Minister of National War Services about this matter.

[Mr. Lacombe.]

I should like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that the editorial in question is evidently based upon a misunderstanding of the position of the opposition and myself in this matter, and I desire to deny the charge that we have been in any way remiss in our duties with respect to the issue in question.

On Wednesday last, after consultation with me, the hon. member for Peterborough West (Mr. Fraser) took the necessary steps to ask for the production of a copy of all censorship orders, regulations or instructions issued under government authority since the outbreak of war. This appears in *Votes and Proceedings* of Thursday, July 1. The hon. member's motion was prompted largely by our desire to have a proper basis for examination of the ministry with respect to the allegations raised by Doctor Scott and certain newspapers, particularly the *Winnipeg Free Press* and the *Toronto Globe and Mail*. We felt that a fuller and more complete examination of censorship matters generally and this case in particular could best be accomplished when the papers asked for had been tabled and a more appropriate opportunity presented itself for careful and detailed examination of the ministry. I rise therefore on this question of privilege to put the record straight so far as our position as an opposition is concerned.

PRIVATE BILLS COMMITTEE

First and second reports of standing committee on miscellaneous private bills.—Mr. Fontaine.

TAX CONVENTION ACT

CANADA-UNITED STATES CONVENTION AND PROTOCOL FOR AVOIDANCE OF DOUBLE TAXATION AND PREVENTION OF FISCAL EVASION

Hon. C. W. G. GIBSON (Minister of National Revenue) moved for leave to introduce bill No. 119, respecting a certain tax convention and protocol between Canada and the United States of America, signed at Washington in the United States of America, on the fourth day of March, 1942.

He said: The Canada-United States of America tax convention was considered by this house on June 8, 1942, and a resolution was adopted at that time approving the convention and protocol. The Department of Justice has recently given the opinion that, in order to give legal effect to the convention, it is necessary that it be confirmed by statute, and for that reason this bill is being introduced.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.