

*Privilege—Mr. Sharp*

about the future of their production. Mr. Speaker, clearly this is a complex issue because of numerous implications such as domestic marketing of the exports of similar products which compete with our own production—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. There is already a question of privilege before the House concerning the comments made last night by the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens). Does the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) have a contribution to make on this issue or does he wish to put a question of privilege other than that which is being debated now?

**Mr. Fortin:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has long been a day to day life in the dairy industry. Each year we have to start from scratch and, at the last minute, like—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Once again, I ask the hon. member for Lotbinière if he has anything to add to the discussion on the question of privilege raised by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp)?

**Mr. Fortin:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All right, let us talk about the question of privilege. It has now been exactly one hour and a half since the House of Commons, under the influence of the President of the Privy Council, began debating a question of privilege which, in my opinion, is rather unimportant at least for the time being because the government refuses to conduct an inquiry. And, Mr. Speaker, this day was most important. It was to be devoted to the dairy producers from eastern Canada, and we have to do just that.

**An hon. Member:** He does not want to talk about it!

**Mr. Fortin:** Mr. Speaker, this is why I ask before the discussion on this question of privilege is over and before you make a decision let the President of the Privy Council rise with the same willingness he showed when he rose on his question of privilege and let him extend the debate by at least one hour after five o'clock, otherwise, Mr. Speaker, this situation is ridiculous.

I therefore ask the President of the Privy Council, before this question of privilege is disposed of, to show as much equity for the producers as for the ministers.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Of course, the hon. member for Lotbinière has raised a question of privilege which is completely different from the one raised by the President of the Privy Council. It may be a very worthwhile and important question of privilege, but it is distinct from the other.

[*English*]

The several questions that have been raised in respect of the question of privilege raised by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) are very important and complex. There are two aspects that I should deal with now: I prefer to reserve on the remaining aspects. The first is with respect to the argument that the matter ought not to have been raised procedurally today. If it is a valid interpretation of the rules and practices of the House, I think that would be strict to the extreme. Indication was given, as a result of the remarks, that argument would be made today: notice was given to me this morning. I have indeed never taken the position that that kind of intervention,

[Mr. Fortin.]

between last night and this morning, is not really at the first reasonable opportunity and I do not think I should. Second, insofar as the question of privilege is concerned, we have been listening to argument which mixes up three questions of procedure in the House.

The first has to do with a question of privilege, the second with unparliamentary language, and the third a rather vague practice relating to charges made if they are specific, withdrawn or in some way connected with an offer to put a member's seat at risk. That practice is very vague. In any case, it is the third aspect of procedure. I have no difficulty with the first not being a question of privilege. I should lay that to rest now. No motion has been attached and no request has been made for action by the Chair in respect of a question of privilege. I can, therefore, hold at this moment that no question of privilege exists in those terms.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** There remain, however, two questions. Did the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens) use unparliamentary language, which relates to the second question, that is, it constitutes a charge which ought to be very specifically made, or withdrawn. The interpretation that the Chair has to go through in order to come to some decision is a difficult one. In order to finalize those two specific questions, I prefer to reserve on this matter until Monday.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It will be brief. In the course of my question during the question period, I suggested that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and Chief Justice Deschênes had differed. In answering, the Prime Minister said that he thought I was in error, that he had referred to Mr. Justice Mackay. He asked me to look up *Hansard*. I have no wish to misrepresent the Prime Minister's position. My question, however, was based on a statement which appears in *Hansard*. I leave it to the House and the Prime Minister to see whether my interpretation was correct or incorrect. At page 11866, the Prime Minister said:

I wanted to assure myself from the ministers, that this was not the case. I did assume myself from the ministers that that was not the case. I even had the assurance it was not illegal and not improper. Mr. Drury, obviously, would not have done something he believed to be improper. I had his version of it and Mr. Ouellet's version. According to both their versions, there had not only been no illegality; there had been no impropriety. Obviously, Justice Deschênes and Justice Hugessen do not share that point of view.

That seems to be a perfectly sound conclusion to draw since the Prime Minister agreed, after talking to his ministers, that there was no impropriety or illegality. The Prime Minister said that both Mr. Justice Deschênes and Mr. Justice Hugessen do not share that point of view. It therefore appears that the Prime Minister was differing with Mr. Justice Deschênes.

**Mr. Peters:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Because of the surreptitious question of privilege that has been raised, and the difficulty it has caused to the Cr ditiste party with regard to presenting their case, I would ask Your Honour to ascertain from the House whether they would agree to extend the sitting hours today so that