

Privilege—Mr. Stanfield

collusion with the Tories" to force withdrawal of the legislation.

● (1500)

Mr. Speaker, I checked the meaning of "collusion" very quickly in the Concise Oxford Dictionary; it is defined as a "fraudulent secret understanding". I deny there is any collusion between the Tories, as the minister said, and *Times* and *Reader's Digest*. I deny it, and I resent it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: I would think, also, that a number of government supporters who have opposed the minister's legislation would resent any suggestion, by implication, that they might be involved in collusion with *Time* and *Reader's Digest*. It is said that there was pressure on the Liberal government of the day back in the sixties, pressure said to come from the United States government generated by the *Time* magazine organization, pressure which resulted in a special category of periodical publications being created by parliament on the motion of the government of the day which is reported to have knuckled under to this pressure. I want to say that there was no pressure on me or my colleagues by the United States government or by *Time* magazine.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: Along with the hon. member for Fundy-Royal (Mr. Fairweather), I met Mr. LaRue of *Time* magazine at his request. He stated *Time's* position to us. He tried to exert no pressure. His conduct was perfectly proper. He did not offer me, the hon. member for Fundy-Royal or any of our friends a 75 per cent interest in *Time Magazine of Canada*.

As to *Reader's Digest*, certainly it has conducted a very active campaign to generate support from its readers to bring pressure upon members of parliament. It could scarcely be described as a campaign designed to put pressure on members of parliament. I would say, sir, very bluntly that there is nothing improper in such a campaign. It is out in the open and, quite frankly, I cannot blame the management of *Reader's Digest* for fighting back against a minister who says quite openly that *Reader's Digest* cannot possibly continue under the regime he has in mind.

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: This is not the time to debate the merits of the minister's plan with regard to periodicals which can qualify for income tax deductions for advertisers, and which cannot. I simply want to say that we in the Conservative Party are not prepared to grant the government the control over content that the minister is seeking to acquire.

I rise this afternoon because I deeply resent the slur of the Secretary of State and also because the slurs from members of the government seem to be escalating in number. The Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) a short time back was good enough to withdraw any slur that might have been implied or explicit in anything he

[Mr. Stanfield.]

had said. We went through the episode with the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) a little while ago, as well. I simply want to say to the Secretary of State, through you, Mr. Speaker, that his remark was mean-spirited and unworthy of him.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: If the minister is prepared to withdraw the remark, that will be the end of it as far as I am concerned. If he is not prepared to withdraw the remark, and Your Honour should rule that I have a prima facie case of privilege, I will move, seconded by the hon. member for Huron-Middlesex (Mr. McKinley):

That the subject matter of this question of privilege be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Hon. James Hugh Faulkner (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, one of the most fundamental ground rules of the House of Commons is—

An hon. Member: Honesty.

Mr. Faulkner: Precisely. When an hon. member indicates to another hon. member that in fact something did not take place, then I think the proper course of action is to accept the explanation, and I do that with good spirit. I accept the explanation of the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield)—

Mr. Stanfield: It is very gracious of you.

Mr. Faulkner:—about the suggestion of collusion, but in view of some of the things he said I should like to comment briefly on the circumstances that led to the expression. I would remind you, Mr. Speaker, that in the debate on this issue—I will not get into the substance of the question—back on January 23 this year, the spokesman for the official opposition, the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens), in responding to the statement on motions I made that day, said:

Mr. Speaker, in responding to the statement just made I would first like to say, on behalf of the official opposition, that we are pleased the government has clarified this matter at long last. We believe that the move to eliminate the income tax advantage shared mainly by two magazines, *Time* and *Reader's Digest*, is a good one.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Faulkner: That was in January. Then we got into the debate in May. But something happened between January and May. I am not sure what it was and I am prepared to accept the explanation of the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Nowlan: Basford spoke out.

Mr. Faulkner: The hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) in his remarks said the bill should be withdrawn. The hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie), with a more colloquial expression, said it should be put in dry dock. The hon. member for Fraser Valley East (Mr. Patterson) said it should be withdrawn.

An hon. Member: So what?

Mr. Beatty: Don't forget me.