

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Members have been free at any time to submit to me one hour's notice of an intent to raise this matter as a question of privilege. I understand the dilemma the Hon. Member for York South-Weston is in. I am not entirely sure that it is really a matter arising out of the Question Period itself. That is my procedural problem.

Let me indicate to the Hon. Member that I will hear his question of privilege. I think the Hon. Member for York South-Weston has finished his presentation as to whether or not there is a *prima facie* case. Does anyone else wish to speak on the matter?

Before we hear from anyone else, may I interrupt for one minute? The Hon. Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Miss Carney) wishes to seek the floor on a point of order, I believe.

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#### POINT OF ORDER

##### WITHDRAWAL OF TERM USED DURING QUESTION PERIOD

**Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Yes, I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I do not want to show disrespect for the House. Therefore, I will withdraw any phrasing which the Chair finds unacceptable.

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

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#### PRIVILEGE

##### INVESTIGATION BY MR. SPEAKER OF REPORTED REVELATION BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member for York South-Weston has made a presentation claiming privilege arising out of the Question Period and the comments of the Deputy Prime Minister. Is there anything further on the matter? The Hon. President of the Privy Council (Mr. Hnatyshyn).

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to put the matter into perspective.

**Mr. Benjamin:** Whose perspective?

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** There have been references made to a transcript of statements made by the Deputy Prime Minister.

**Mr. Benjamin:** Remember Favreau.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** There has been a statement made on the floor of the House by the Deputy Prime Minister in which he denies the least suggestion of impropriety. I think that the parliamentary tradition—and we are looking at this matter from the parliamentary tradition—is to accept the words of an Hon. Member. Accordingly, quite apart from the fact that a Member's question of privilege has to do with the ability of that Member to carry on his or her responsibilities, which are

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somehow impeded by activities which restrict his or her ability to carry out those responsibilities, I can think of nothing that would be less relevant to that whole situation than allegations of a general nature with respect to what transpired a quarter of a century ago.

On the basis of whether or not there is a *prima facie* case with respect to a question of privilege, I suggest, with all due respect, that the Hon. Member has not put forward one scintilla of evidence, or one point in his submission, which would indicate that he in any way is being prevented from carrying on his responsibilities, in terms of the Question Period, or in terms of debate on the floor of the House of Commons.

● (1510)

**Mr. Nunziata:** I would like to move the appropriate motion, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member will understand there are some other matters to be dealt with.

**Ms. Copps:** Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to speak in support of the Chair finding this a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege in light of the fact that parliamentary tradition, which dates back to before the history of this Confederation and this Parliament, states that Members of each respective Party must have the opportunity to get together in a caucus forum and debate issues of importance not only to their own caucus and to their Party but also to the country.

I feel that if I cannot be guaranteed the privacy of those deliberations, and if I cannot be guaranteed, through some action on the part of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Nielsen), that in fact the insidious intercepting of the caucuses' private deliberations is not happening—we do not know, it happened in 1964 and in 1965 and it could be happening now—it will directly affect the contribution I make in my caucus and subsequently in parliamentary debate. So I feel it is—

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps) will know full well that to argue that something could be happening today is not to raise a question of privilege.

Let me take one minute, if I may, and explain that I have not heard, arising out of the comments which have been made in Question Period, a *prima facie* question of privilege which was attempted to be made by the Hon. Member for York South-Weston (Mr. Nunziata). That does not prevent, as a matter of form, someone who believes there is a matter of privilege arising from some other event or article—if that is the case they wish to make—from giving me notice of that matter. But out of what has been presented to me, and coming from Question Period, I see no question of privilege.

**Mr. Nunziata:** Mr. Speaker, I have not been given the opportunity to present my case.