

it absolutely clear that I do not say it in criticism of either Member. All Members of this House realize that both Right Honourable Members involved have tremendous obligations about the country on behalf of this country and in their capacity as leading and prominent Members, and it simply is not possible for them to be here confronting each other every day much I am sure to the chagrin of the press gallery and other honourable Members who find it entertaining.

In any event I am convinced in looking at the context of the case that had that confrontation taken place probably the remarks upon which I am asked to deliberate now would have been the subject of questions, of points of order, of rebuttal, of reply and the kind of cut and thrust of debate that has made this Chamber the very distinguished place it is. Unfortunately, however, that did not take place. The remarks involved fall into three categories. The first had to do with the stocking of fish in Harrington Lake. The result of that intervention has caused the Prime Minister to come before the House to apologize to the House and withdraw the remark. That obviously had its effect.

Surely there can be nothing with which to go to committee in that regard. Another dealt with the bomb shelter at 24 Sussex Drive. It has been pointed out that there is a considerable dispute as to the extent of the expense. The significance of that whole issue is a matter of opinion, it is the subject of a debate that the listener should judge.

In the final analysis, the remarks that are the most significant have to do with the acquisition of Harrington Lake, and in that regard I think it is not appropriate to listen now to the words of those who say that the words were not intended this way or that way. I think that would be extending leniency beyond the point that I should, and if I were to accept only now the expression that these words were intended to suggest wrongdoing, it might be better for me to put the question to the House and let the House decide. Instead of doing that, I will go to the original remarks of the Right Honourable Prime Minister which I will now quote. The Prime Minister said: "In the same speech, the Right Honourable gentleman talked about Harrington Lake. I think that was another unfortunate reference, because I suppose he made the largest land grab when he was in office that was ever made by any private citizen of Canada. He did so when he decided that Harrington Lake and the buildings on it should be the country residence of the Prime Minister. I do not think anybody then sitting on my party's side of the House criticized that decision. He was adding thousands of acres of land for his private enjoyment. I think it was a justifiable gesture, one from which I personally have benefitted. In the same way I hope the next Prime Minister will benefit from the swimming pool at 24 Sussex Drive."

It is for the House and for the public to judge, insofar as they are interested, the wisdom or nicety of those remarks, but that is not the question which is before me.

The sole question before me is whether those remarks intended to cast aspersions upon the character of the Right Honourable Member for Prince Albert. In view of the admission or expression contained therein that whatever action was taken at that time was taken with the support of the whole House of Commons without a contrary voice and that if there was any doubt about that the present Prime Minister added that in retrospect, in his own personal opinion, that action was proper and appropriate at the time, I cannot reconcile those public expressions of approval of the action that was taken with a finding that there is an allegation of some impropriety or misconduct on the part of the Right Honourable gentleman.

I therefore find, in examining them—and I have to come to a decision one way or another—that there is a serious dispute and disagreement as to what the facts were, and there is a further dispute and disagreement as to what the implications or significance should be taken from those facts. Those are ingredients for debate and not ingredients for a question of privilege, and therefore it is my view and my hope that the matter will end there.

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Mr. Leggatt, seconded by Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre), by leave of the House, introduced Bill C-392, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (control of weapons and firearms), which was read the first time and ordered to be printed and ordered for a second reading at the next sitting of the House.

On motion of Mr. Loiselle (Chambly) for Mr. Loiselle (Saint-Henri), seconded by Mr. Dupont, it was ordered,—That pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 99, the petition seeking the incorporation of The National Commercial Bank of Canada—*La Banque Nationale de Commerce du Canada*, filed after the time limit specified under Standing Order 90, be referred to the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Private Bills and Standing Orders, together with the Eighth Report of the Clerk of Petitions thereon, presented to the House on Thursday, May 29, 1975, for any recommendations the Committee deems advisable.

Resolved,—That an humble Address be presented to His Excellency praying that he will cause to be laid before this House a copy of all correspondence from or to the Prime Minister or other Minister of the government with Mayor Drapeau or representatives of the Corporation of the City of Montreal in connection with the 1976 Olympic Games and in particular any letters that have to do with the matter of federal assistance to the City or Olympic organization.—(Notice of Motion for the Production of Papers No. 23—Mr. Diefenbaker).