

Oral Questions

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. Over the weekend, at a meeting held in Drummondville, the parliamentary secretary to the minister announced to the population that such an act would be introduced in the House before Christmas and that important statements would be made in this connection. I want to protest against the practice of making unfounded statements elsewhere; I also object to that same policy being pursued in this House merely to serve the interests of that "politicking" parliamentary secretary.

[English]

Mr. Bell: On a point of order—

Mr. Prud'homme: On a question of privilege—

Mr. Speaker: Order. We are going to establish a record for questions of privilege today. I will hear the hon. member on his question of privilege.

[Translation]

Mr. Prud'homme: Mr. Speaker, you will admit with me that this is surely a *prima facie* question of privilege. The hon. member, as he usually does, has wrongly reported to the House my comments which appear in the newspaper before him, *La Tribune*. It is true that I spoke to several hundred Liberal supporters in Drummondville Sunday night. I would therefore urge the hon. member, if he wishes to deal with the question of privilege in the House, to quote exactly what has been reported by the newspaper. I merely said that before Christmas we would be signing agreements with some provinces, including Quebec naturally. Now, I say that the hon. member is interpreting what he read in *La Tribune* and I maintain that it is not quite fair for this House of Commons—

• (1500)

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the hon. member for Lotbinière be kind enough to resume his seat? He raised the question of privilege. The member concerned answered. It seems to me that the interpretation of a report in one way or another gives rise to a debate between both members. I must rule that there is no question of privilege.

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on another question of privilege.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Lotbinière on a point of order.

[English]

I will then recognize the hon. member for Saint John-Lancaster and the hon. member for Central Nova on points of order. We will hear all these points of order and questions of privilege in order, one by one.

[Translation]

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I think I should reply to the hon. member because he said—

Mr. Speaker: Order. If the hon. member wishes to reply to the parliamentary secretary, I must tell him that I have already ruled that this is not a question of privilege. The parliamentary secretary pointed out to the hon. member that he was misunderstanding a newspaper report. The hon. member now wants to rise to give his own explanation.

[Mr. Speaker.]

tion. Perhaps another hon. member will seek to challenge the interpretation of the hon. member for Lotbinière. This is not a question of privilege. I do not think it is in the interest of the hon. members to pursue this dispute.

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[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Bell: Mr. Speaker, may I, although a day early, ask the government House leader to keep this exciting mood going and to clear the decks for action. Can the government House leader tell us that Monday will in fact be an official allotted day for a vote of non-confidence?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I would designate the day; if the hon. member wants to designate non-confidence, that is his opportunity.

Mr. Bell: Assuming that it will be Monday, will the House leader take the opportunity to clear away measures such as the family allowance bill this week, which we will pass very quickly without debate, so that members will be able to vote on Monday without any excuses or inhibitions?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I did not realize that my hon. friend was approaching Monday with such timidity.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I say a brief word on the same point of order. The other day when I asked the government House leader if he would call these two items for third reading, the Canada Pension Plan No. 2 and the family allowances bill, to which we would agree without debate, he said he was interested in some *quid pro quo*. May I offer on behalf of our party also to give him, without any further debate, the second reading of Bill S-4. These three things could be done in a minute and a half.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I wish to rise again on a question of privilege.

I asked the hon. minister, at the end of the question period, whether he intended to submit a legislation. As you clearly heard he categorically replied no. The hon. member suggested that I did not repeat his words exactly. Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief. I want it to be understood that I have repeated only facts and that I said nothing—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member is again raising a question of privilege. I think this is the same question that was raised previously. I do not want to be unfair to the hon. member but I fail to see how we should proceed further about this matter of interpretation of a press report between the hon. member and the parliamentary secretary. The hon. member knows that under a House order we should proceed with votes on Bill C-176 and I