Ottawa, Ontario,
April 27, 1972.

Mr. Ovide Laflamme, Chairman,
Standing Committee on Privileges
and Elections,
House of Commons,
Ottawa, Ontario.

Dear Mr. Laflamme:

On April 21 a letter was written to me by your Clerk with respect to the work of the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections of which you are the Chairman.

At the time of its receipt I was away from Ottawa not having returned to my office until today. I have asked my secretary to reply to the letter from your Clerk.

On March 16 you wrote to me in connection with these matters and I replied to you on March 28—some 31 days ago. It may well be that you have overlooked the courtesy of a reply which I had expected to receive from you long before this late date.

In my letter of March 28 I drew your attention to the inaccuracy of the terminology used by you in your letter of March 16—an error which appears to be deliberately perpetuated by your Clerk in his letter to me of April 21 and by references by Liberal Committee Members no doubt for the benefit of the press. Let me once again say that I would have expected you as Chairman to be more accurate and impartial in your references (and those of your Clerk) to the terminology used by me in the House. These are set out verbatim in my letter to you of March 28. I also set out in my letter of March 28 to yourself a suggested course to be followed by the Committee in order to reassure Members with respect to the assertions of the Prime Minister as set forth at page 745-6 of Hansard (English) March 13, 1972. It is my understanding that the Committee has not yet seen fit to pursue the areas of enquiry suggested by me and unless such course is followed, in my view, there can be no meaningful results from the work of the Committee.

It is not my intention to submit to a strategy devised by the Liberal majority of the Committee (and the same majority on the Sub-Committee on agenda and procedure) in order to permit the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections to be used for the purpose of 'witch hunting' or to pillory Government employees who desire anonymity and who have not been reassured by the so called assurance of "protection" offered to them by the Prime Minister referred to in the third paragraph of the letter of your Clerk dated April 21.

Once again may I urge the Committee to pursue the constructive course of enquiry suggested in my letter of March 28.

Sincerely,

Erik Nielsen
EN:dk
24960—22

Ottawa, April 27th, 1972.

Mr. Erik Nielsen, M.P.,
House of Commons,
Room 322 West Block,
Ottawa.

Dear Mr. Nielsen:

At 11:30 a.m. today I received by hand your letter dated April 27th.

You indicate that you had asked your secretary to reply to the letter sent to you on April 21 by the Clerk of the Committee, which clearly indicates that the substance of that letter of April 21 had been known to you at the latest on Monday, 24th, the last.

The Committee met on April 25 and today, to your personal knowledge, without you indicating your intention to accept the invitation made to you on April 21 to appear.

The Clerk has been ordered to send you true copy of the resolution passed unanimously by the Committee at today's meeting, inviting you again at your convenience to appear within the next three weeks, to substantiate your allegations made in the House on March 14.

We would appreciate having a precise answer from you indicating if you will or not appear before the Committee.

As to the course of action of the Committee, it's up to its members to decide. Your suggestions made in your letter of March 28 to that regard were taken into consideration by the Steering Committee and unanimously found unnecessary and premature, unless we had some elements of evidence.

Your insinuation of partiality of me as chairman should require at least to be substantiated.

Do you permit me to qualify it as an allegation?

I was rather surprised to be told by a member of the Press that he had a copy of your letter I had just received fifteen minutes earlier.

I apologize for not having personally answered your letter of March 28.

Your allegation of partiality of my part contained in it did indicate to me that any reply I would have sent, could not have been taken seriously by his recipient.

Yours truly,

Ovide Laflamme
Chairman

Ottawa, Ontario
April 28, 1972.

Ovide Laflamme, M.P., Chairman,
Standing Committee on Privileges
and Elections,
House of Commons,
Ottawa, Ontario.

Dear Mr. Laflamme:

Your letter of April 27th was received by me at 9:30 a.m. this date. This is the first I have heard from you