

Inquiries of the Ministry

intervene now, and that is precisely what I am doing. We will not make much progress, certainly, in the consideration of the affairs of the House of Commons if hon. members one after another rise on points of order and take it upon themselves to impute motives to other hon. members. I wonder where that will lead to?

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, may I point out to Your Honour that although there are other things I might say, and I may say them on another occasion, I will obey your wish. May I suggest to Your Honour that, despite your suggestion that that word be withdrawn, the Prime Minister has not made any gesture of rising to his feet. That is why I have risen to my feet. If the Prime Minister will be decent enough, man enough and Prime Minister enough to withdraw, I will be glad to sit down.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to the same point of order.

We feel that the Prime Minister of Canada is imputing to us motives we do not have. As for us, we can remind him of certain facts. Indeed, he never participates in any debate on procedure in this house.

Mr. Speaker: I wonder if this intervention is useful.

[*English*]

Mr. Nowlan: Mr. Speaker, after the second slight occurred I rose in my place, because I wanted the Prime Minister to withdraw what he said. He has not done so. Your Honour pointed out that imputation of motives is contrary to the rules. Unfortunately the hon. member for York South has fallen into the trap of seeming to impute motives. Imputation of motives can undermine our whole system of debate in this house and I say that I will not stay quiet unless the Prime Minister withdraws.

Mr. Speaker: My ruling was not that the Prime Minister should withdraw his remark but that he should indicate to the house that he was not imputing motives. That is the difference. I should like the Prime Minister to say that to the Chair and to all hon. members. I have not suggested, nor do I suggest now, that he should withdraw the word he used; but he knows as well as I do that we can neither impute motives, nor say we are

imputing motives. I invite the Prime Minister to agree with me.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, although that word used may describe the seriousness of questions asked by the opposition, I certainly wish to obey your ruling, sir, and I do so.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, does that cover—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):—Your Honour's suggestion that it would be imputing motives to say that the point of order raised was tantamount to hypocrisy, and that the Prime Minister is withdrawing that?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have already made my ruling on the first point of order raised by the hon. member. I told the hon. member I did not think it was unparliamentary to refer to a debate in this house as a filibuster because I think, if we are to rationalize the situation, that this is imputing collective motives. I wonder if that is unparliamentary. Perhaps it is not. In any event I should not like to renew the argument which started 15 minutes ago. I have made my ruling indicating that it is my view that saying that debate is a filibuster is not in itself unparliamentary. I asked whether the qualifications which have been added have made the situation worse. I have some doubts, but I do not think so. I have made my ruling and the hon. gentleman agreed with me. I think, so far as that aspect of the matter is concerned, that is the end of it.

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, I raised the original point of order inasmuch as it was my question that brought on this furore.

Mr. Trudeau: Nobody even noticed.

Mr. Thompson: I do not know whether the Prime Minister considers that 80 per cent of the questions coming from this side of the house are hypocritical or that 80 per cent of us are hypocrites.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I ask for the co-operation of hon. members.

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, I had a supplementary question to ask and I think it is most important to clear this matter up.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. If the hon. member will kindly resume his seat I will