

Leader of the Opposition to the effect that the publicity is misleading does not hold water. His allegation is based on his interpretation of what we are now doing in the House. Moreover, we do not agree that this advertising campaign is directly related to the matter before the House. What is certain at least, Madam Speaker, it is not inconsistent with the motion moved by the hon. member for Edmonton East (Mr. Yurko) and which was unanimously adopted by the House. There is nothing in the advertising campaign which goes against the motion unanimously adopted by Parliament already.

Mr. Clark: That is not true!

[English]

Mr. Pinard: Before the right hon. member says it is not true, let me repeat what I said. What I said was that in the publicity I have seen so far—and I may have missed some of it, but I have learned nothing new from the Leader of the Opposition—there has been nothing contrary to the substance of the motion, which was approved unanimously by this House, of the hon. member for Edmonton East.

Mr. Clark: Read these, and you will see the differences.

Mr. Pinard: The Leader of the Opposition may disagree with me, but what is obvious is that I am in full disagreement with the interpretation of the facts of the right hon. Leader of the Opposition. That shows that this is a matter of debate essentially and not a question of privilege.

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): Madam Speaker, I want to make a very brief intervention in support of my leader and the position he has so adequately and well articulated with respect to this question of privilege.

The government House leader has simply failed to address himself to the very specific points raised by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark). The Leader of the Opposition has pointed out that the publications put out by the Government of Canada are false, incorrect, and a misrepresentation of the position set forth, not by myself or by the Leader of the Opposition, but by the government represented by the cabinet in the House. I cannot understand why the government does not understand that simple proposition. It is simply wrong. Hon. members opposite should have the courage and forthrightness to stand and admit that these statements in this document are wrong.

Having said that, I think the points Your Honour alluded to in the course of your remarks in addressing yourself to the matters which have been raised thus far are very relevant, because we are now looking at actions which have been taken by the Government of Canada through a planned arrangement with respect to publicity and public advertising under the directorship of the Minister of State for Multiculturalism (Mr. Fleming).

Hon. members opposite stand and say quite frankly that they are going into an extensive and expensive advertising campaign to try to put across the positions of the Government of Canada and to create better understanding. However, in the

course of that pursuit there is the great possibility of actions being taken by members of the cabinet and by the government represented in this House which do in effect misrepresent, by the manipulation of public opinion, the position of each and every member which thereby affect my rights as a member of Parliament. They affect my privileges. What we are now facing is the prospect and the possibility—and I take it Your Honour will have an opportunity to read this material—of a total and absolute misrepresentation of my position. If the government is left unfettered in its ability to do that with the full resources it has at its command, including the public treasury, we will possibly be entering into an area of government by public advertising agency as opposed to government responsible to the Parliament of Canada.

• (1240)

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Government by Goldfarb.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: I simply want to reiterate that I think the Leader of the Opposition has raised a valid question of privilege, with specific instances which relate to the ruling you made this very day. I think that the representatives of the government could stand up and admit that these statements, as the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out to them, are false and incorrect. I do not want to reiterate that, but should like to simply say, as a member of Parliament, that my rights will be affected by manipulation of public opinion polls by the government, and I think it is a valid base upon which you can find our privileges to have been adversely affected.

Hon. Jim Fleming (Minister of State, Multiculturalism): Madam Speaker—

Mr. Ouellet: Tell him he is insulting the Canadian public.

Mr. Fleming: Madam Speaker, I will try to be brief but it is important that I touch on a couple of points because the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) in particular first said yesterday, and then again today, that I had apparently done something which was in defiance of the Chair or an insult to the Chair. I would not do that because of my respect for that institution, and because of my respect for you as the individual in the chair.

The implication of the charge made by the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition that somehow the government had defied the Chair because some ads were run in newspapers—and I want to talk about those ads in the proper context rather than in the misleading context such as that put forward by the Leader of the Opposition—was that we were preventing you, Madam Speaker, from having the opportunity of making an objective judgment and then delivering your decision today.

It seems to me that the implication of that is that the government cannot carry on its business, and indeed could not carry on the constitutional debate while you were considering an issue which related to material discussed in the constitutional debate. It would seem to me that that would be an absurdity if indeed the business of the government and its responsibilities to the Canadian public ceased when you were