

Supply—Trade and Commerce

Mr. Trainor: May I point out to Your Honour that the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra was looking after himself and he did not have time to do anything else. I suggest respectfully to Your Honour that no member of this house should refer to the habit of speech of another member in this house as mischievous. I think that that is going beyond the rules of the house.

The Chairman: Do I understand that the hon. member for Winnipeg South is requesting me to indicate that the word "mischievous" is unparliamentary?

Mr. Trainor: I think in this particular connotation I would so suggest.

The Chairman: Item 483.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Chairman, I rise on a question of privilege. During the time I was called out of the chamber for a few minutes yesterday a statement was made by the Minister of Trade and Commerce with regard to the Polish wheat transaction of which I was informed when I returned to the chamber. It was impossible for me to make a statement until I had found out in *Hansard* actually what had been said. Since then I have not only seen it in *Hansard* but I have seen it reported in the press and therefore I believe that it is time to deal with the statement. Referring to the Polish wheat transaction the Minister of Trade and Commerce is reported on page 6144 of *Hansard* of yesterday as follows:

But after this airing of the situation in the House of Commons, and the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition, I would not be at all surprised if Poland said, "We will take the 50,000 tons, but you can keep the rest of it." I say that seriously. I hope that critical comments will not be repeated;—

If the Minister of Trade and Commerce had not been away for some time he would have learned something of the attitude of this parliament toward the responsibility of parliament as expressed within the past few days. I find another of his statements:

I hope we will hear no more about the Polish transaction.

May I point out, Mr. Chairman, that the Polish transaction was raised in the form of a question because we were learning about the government policy through the press and not in this house. We still have before us the statement of the Prime Minister that the transaction was not completed and the statement of the Minister of Trade and Commerce that it was completed. If there is any uncertainty or confusion about this matter, the responsibility rests fully with the Minister of Trade and Commerce. In addition to that, Mr. Chairman, we have not reached

the point where the members on this side of the house are to deny themselves either the right or the responsibility of ascertaining the facts with regard to government policy in connection with matters of this kind. So far as this transaction was concerned, we sought information to which we were entitled. In fact, we sought information which should have been placed before this house without any question. The suggestion that there has been any interference with the Polish transaction or any other transaction by our efforts to obtain, by a good deal of questioning, the simple details of this transaction, is nonsense.

Mr. Lesage: Slanted questions.

Mr. Drew: What is that?

Mr. Lesage: There was a slant in the questions.

Mr. Drew: Oh, Mr. Chairman, the only slant in the questions was a slant toward the responsibility of parliament.

Mr. Lesage: Oh, oh.

Mr. Drew: When the word "slanted" is used, may I point out that the answer of the Minister of Trade and Commerce was slanted in such a way that it misled this house and misled Mr. Speaker, as recorded in his ruling. Instead of talking critically of the efforts made to obtain the facts, the Minister of Trade and Commerce would have been well advised to apologize to the house for the statement which was made and which did misrepresent what the facts were. He did that in an effort to postpone until the estimates the discussion of something which apparently, according to his repeated statements, actually had been completed. It either was completed or it was not completed. The Prime Minister said it was not. The Minister of Trade and Commerce said it was. Then in dealing with the motion before the house Mr. Speaker, taking the statement of the Prime Minister, said that this had not been completed and that we might therefore be wasting time if we discussed the subject on that occasion. I mention this because it is an example of the—

The Chairman: Order. With all deference, may I interrupt the Leader of the Opposition at this point. He rose ostensibly to discuss a question of privilege, and, as I understand it, he has based his question of privilege on the following quotation from page 6144 of yesterday's *Hansard* of the remarks of the Minister of Trade and Commerce. These are the words:

But after this airing of the situation in the House of Commons, and the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition, I would not be at