

Administration of Justice

affected by the question of privilege brought up by the hon. member for Calgary North. I submit, sir, that it is clear there is nothing in the rules suggesting that only one type of motion may be moved or that only one method of dealing with such a situation should be adopted.

I submit that if the motion based on the question of privilege were found in order and that motion or the substance of that motion were dealt with by the house, the question of privilege would be finished with. But if the motion itself is found out of order you cannot just by finding a particular motion out of order kill the substantive question. I only have to refer the minister to any piece of business dealt with by the house. If a motion were made to proceed with any substantive motion dealing with government business and the motion was then ruled out of order, on the minister's argument the government's business would be finished. I submit, sir, that in that context the argument of the minister does not stand up.

Next I wish to refer to the contention of the Prime Minister that for three days this house has been out of order. It is my contention, sir, that we have been in order throughout this time. On all occasions that members have been talking about the question of privilege they have been in order in that they have the right to talk on a matter of privilege. They have the right to raise it and to suggest methods of dealing with it. There is nothing out of order in our proceedings at this time except, as has been pointed out on several occasions, that the Chair has been lenient in that three or four different matters of privilege have been talked about at the same time.

Mr. Lambert: There is one point, Mr. Speaker, that I should like to mention. If it will assist the house to get out of the impasse it is in, which was the motivation of my motion, I am quite prepared, although I reserve my rights as to the correctness of my motion, to remove the words that might be offensive, "for decision," and I can speak as well for my seconder. If this is the matter that provides the stumbling block at this time, in the spirit of co-operation I am quite agreeable to removing those words. I am sure Your Honour would agree that the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre was quite correct in setting forth the authority of the Chair with regard to correcting a motion in this way.

[Mr. Nugent.]

• (4:10 p.m.)

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I rise merely for a moment to say that those of us who discussed the possibility of getting this matter off the floor of this house and getting down to business expressed the hope that any procedural debate which might take place would be a relatively short one. I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that the debate on whether or not this motion is in order has already gone on for well over an hour and, with the greatest of respect, I wonder whether Your Honour is now prepared to make a ruling instead of this debate continuing any longer and the whole purpose of the discussion being destroyed.

Mr. Olson: Could I be permitted to make a suggestion?

Mr. Speaker: It is certainly true that with the consent of the house a number of speakers have been speaking more than once on the point of order. Again, I have been lenient, possibly too lenient. But the house might wish to allow the hon. member an opportunity to add a word or two to what he has already said on this point of order.

Mr. Olson: It is not on the point of order. I wish to make a suggestion. I have a wording prepared as a substitute motion. Perhaps the hon. member for Edmonton West would be prepared to listen to it.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: There was a suggestion made by the hon. member for Edmonton West that if he were allowed to do so by unanimous consent he would amend his motion. I wonder whether this should be considered by the Chair at the present time. It would, of course, require unanimous consent.

Mr. Nielsen: You can do it.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Yukon says I can do it. Perhaps I am starting my comments at the wrong end, but if that is the suggestion made to the Chair—order, please. I suggest to hon. members that they allow me to put my views before the house. With a great deal of patience during the last few days I have listened to hon. members, every one of them, including those who have spoken more than once when perhaps they should have spoken only once on a question of privilege. But we all agree that things got somewhat complicated. One of our difficulties last week was that we had three questions of privilege before the house at the same time.