

Question of Privilege

general in terms and, according to precedents, does not specify the charge levelled against the minister. For this reason, while I agree with the hon. member for Calgary North that there is a prima facie case of privilege, the motion in its present form cannot be accepted by the Chair.

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, you have allowed the question of privilege and it can be further discussed even though you suggest that the motion was not put in the proper form. Am I right in that conclusion?

Mr. Speaker: No. There is nothing before the house. I know the hon. member realizes this. There was a question of privilege which was not followed by a proper motion. There is nothing before the house and we cannot debate a motion which has not been accepted.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I draw your attention to the fact that before Your Honour's ruling the Prime Minister asked for permission of the house to discuss the matter with the member for Calgary North and Your Honour. I understood that what he wished to discuss was the question of privilege. Since Your Honour has agreed that there is a question of privilege, is there not some way in which there can be that discussion within the next half hour or so, reserving to the member for Calgary North the right to bring in at that point, if he wishes to do so, a motion worded in some other way?

Mr. Speaker: No. There still is no motion before the house. There may be arrangements made by hon. members to have informal discussion as to how this matter could be proceeded with by way of another motion but certainly there is no motion before this house now. The decision I have reached is justified, I believe, by precedents and procedures followed in previous years.

Mr. Harkness: Mr. Speaker, I have never pretended to be an expert on the rules of the house. Probably what you have said may be correct on the basis of a literal interpretation of former rulings but I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that this is a matter—

Mr. Speaker: Well, the only attitude or position I can take now is that any further discussion is a comment on the ruling of the Chair. There are other avenues open to hon. members. I am sure they can give the matter serious thought. I would suggest that further

consideration be given the matter in another light.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I should like to move, seconded by the member for Calgary North (Mr. Harkness), that the Minister of Justice do resign.

Mr. Speaker: I cannot accept this motion. I suggest to the hon. member that this is a substantive motion and would require notice. It is not necessarily one which follows logically from the question of privilege, though I have some doubts now.

The Chair is being placed in a very difficult position at this point. If hon. members are going to bring in a series of motions until such time as they may be in a position to find one which will be acceptable under the rules, it is, I suggest, placing the Chair in an impossible position. If the hon. member now makes this motion I will ask, as I have the right, to have the opportunity to consider the motion before ruling on it.

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, in the name of reason, for the good of the house and likewise in the national interest I would suggest it is only right at this time, Your Honour having indicated that there are other ways this matter can be dealt with, that the suggestion be followed that Your Honour, the Prime Minister and the hon. member for Calgary North get together to discuss the matter.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is not a matter which is for the consideration of the Chair.

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of personal privilege. We have been considering a matter of personal privilege raised by the hon. member for Calgary North with which you have dealt. I, sir, have a question of privilege which to a certain extent resembles that raised by the hon. member for Calgary North. I base my question of privilege on the statements made by the Minister of Justice in this house on Friday, outside the house yesterday and today and in this house today. If you take all his statements and examine them separately you cannot help but find that they cast a reflection on the members of Her Majesty's Privy Council, and I take objection to that.

• (3:50 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member says he has a question of privilege which is somewhat like the one raised by the hon.