

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, November 28, 1963

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

DOMINION-PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE

ALLEGED CONTRADICTORY STATEMENTS
RESPECTING QUEBEC SUBMISSION

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Gregoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege concerning the rights of all hon. members in the house to get the truth in answers given by members of the cabinet.

To a question put to him yesterday by the leader of the official opposition, the Acting Prime Minister gave this reply, as reported on page 5156 of *Hansard*, left hand column:

If hon. members will allow me, I will do my best to answer it. In the next place I should like to say that there is nothing either in the statement made by the premier of the province of Quebec or in the statement I listened to this morning that is in the nature of an ultimatum.

Now, Mr. Speaker, on May 27, 1963, I put a question to the Minister of Justice and Acting Prime Minister (Mr. Chevrier) and here is what he replied as shown in *Hansard*, at page 282.

Mr. Speaker, I duly received the press releases the hon. member sent me. I even heard the Quebec premier, Mr. Lesage, on television, when he stated that he considered as an ultimatum the claims or proposals of the province of Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, on May 27, 1963, the Minister of Justice admitted that the Quebec proposals were in the nature of an ultimatum and yesterday, November 27, as shown in *Hansard*, the Minister of Justice stated that there was no ultimatum.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, and this is my point of privilege, that the members of this house are entitled to get the whole truth and not answers where facts are concealed; and members of the cabinet have no right to shirk their responsibilities as the Minister of Justice tried to do yesterday.

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday dealt with the federal-provincial conference now under way.

I remember very well the press releases that the hon. member for Lapointe (Mr. Gregoire) sent me, as well as the answer

I gave him, but in my opinion this release is several months old, while the question of the hon. member concerned only what happened yesterday and immediately before. I am in a position to say that there was no question of an ultimatum.

As a matter of fact, my attention is called to the fact that this was confirmed by the premier of Quebec himself.

Mr. Gregoire: Does the Minister of Justice mean that the premier of Quebec changed his mind?

[Text]

Mr. Speaker: Order please.

INQUIRY AS TO DISCUSSIONS RESPECTING
LOTTERIES

On the orders of the day:

[Translation]

Mr. Georges Valade (St. Mary): Mr. Speaker, may I put a question to the Acting Prime Minister?

Could he tell the house whether the idea of establishing lotteries has been rejected once and for all this morning at the federal-provincial conference or whether it is still possible that the matter will be further considered during this conference?

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am not in a position to provide an answer such as my hon. friend is asking. The matter has not been settled one way or the other.

The purpose of this meeting was to hear the representations made by the attorneys general of the various provinces, and this has been done. A frank discussion was held and in due course, I intend to report on it to the government.

Mr. Valade: Mr. Speaker, may I put a supplementary question?

Will the matter of lotteries be discussed again before the end of the conference?

Mr. Chevrier: Such a decision rests with the provincial premiers. If they so desire, the federal government is willing to discuss the matter again.

[Later:]

Mr. Georges Valade (St. Mary): Mr. Speaker, I am addressing my question to the Minister