

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. As I said a moment ago, and I trust the member will not go further, when the hon. member raised the matter yesterday I made the decision which I still believe is right, that notice should have been given. Notice was given today by the hon. member for Okanagan Boundary and that is why the matter was allowed to go on. May I conclude in this way, by saying if there was any member who was entitled to raise a question of privilege it was the Prime Minister, and he did not raise one. I understand we have another question of privilege.

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, before Your Honour leaves this particular issue I should like to state I agree that the exchange between the two hon. members has been adequate, except in one respect. The hon. member for Okanagan Boundary today used the words "deliberate distortion". I submit to Your Honour that these words, without qualification, constitute an infringement of the privileges of any hon. member. Sometimes, the word "distortion", or other similar words, are used in the heat of debate and upon reflection, hon. members probably wish they had not used them. These words "deliberate distortion" were not used in the heat of debate or as a result of a situation generated in the house but read from a statement, and I suggest these are words the hon. member for Okanagan Boundary should withdraw.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. As the hon. member knows much better than I, there are a number of precedents and a number of authors who list long series of words considered to be unparliamentary. Basically I would think the suggestion by a member that there has been a deliberate intention to mislead the house is normally not acceptable according to the practices of this house. Although the hon. member may have wanted to say there had been a distortion, I am quite sure he did not want to impute to an hon. member an intention to deliberately distort something. I should like that hon. member to confirm my understanding of this situation.

**Mr. Howard (Okanagan Boundary):** Mr. Speaker, I regret that my words have caused so much pain to hon. members in the opposition.

**Mr. Bell:** Not members of the opposition, to the house.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

*Unsatisfactory Reply to Question*

**Mr. Howard (Okanagan Boundary):** I suggest that perhaps I could have worded my remarks more carefully. Out of respect to you, Mr. Speaker, I would withdraw those remarks.

• (2:50 p.m.)

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Speaker:** On this happy note we will go on to the next question of privilege.

[Translation]

MR. FORTIN—UNSATISFACTORY REPLY TO QUESTION ON ORDER PAPER

**Mr. André Fortin (Loibinière):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On that happy note, I should like to rise on a less happy one concerning the Department of Justice.

A few months ago, I put the following question on the order paper:

What works have been declared to be to the general advantage of Canada in the sense of the B.N.A. Act (section 92) since 1867?

The question is most important because it enables us to define the extent to which the B.N.A. Act was applied. Now, some civil servants in the department concerned called me later on to say that it might take a while to prepare a reply and asked me to kindly be patient.

Wanting to prove my good will, I accepted that reply. However, on October 21, 1968, as reported in *Hansard* on page 1577, I was told, and I quote:

No list of such works has been maintained.

Mr. Speaker, my question of privilege is based on the type of reply the members, the representatives of the people, are given. The members endeavour to discharge, as best they can, their duties as legislators and controllers of the government and the administration; in order to do this, they want to be as well informed as possible. The government, on the other hand, tries to thwart their good intentions by refusing to give them the necessary information.

Mr. Speaker, as a true democracy cannot exist unless the members and the voters are fully informed, I complete my question of privilege by asking the Department of Justice to revise its position and give us this information.

Moreover, I propose that the house adjourn its business to force the government to tell the house what works have been declared to be to the general advantage of Canada. I make