

a tendency, directly or indirectly, to produce such results may be treated as a contempt even though there is no precedent of the offence.

Were the words spoken by the minister an attempt to impede and obstruct the work of the committee? Was the making of a statement outside the House contrary to the order of the House? In fact, the order of the House was that the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections consider a matter raised by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald). The suggestion is that the action of the House ordering that a matter be considered by a committee is at the same time a prohibition that it be commented upon otherwise than in committee.

I have been unable to find any precedent to support this suggestion. In my estimation the citation from May's 18th edition dealing with the impeding or obstruction of House business contemplates situations that are entirely different from that which is now under question.

The examples given by May of misconduct which may be treated as a contempt of Parliament refer to misconduct of strangers, misconduct of counsel, misbehaviour on the part of witnesses and disobedience to rules or orders of either House. Examples of such disobedience are given as the refusal or neglect of a witness to attend, the neglect to make a return, neglect to withdraw from the House when so directed, disclosure of proceedings in secret session. All these are clear examples of malfeasance which, in my view, do not appear to be relevant to the circumstances of the case before us.

The contention of the hon. member, based on a citation from Eric Taylor's "The House of Commons at Work", is that a breach of privilege is also a contempt of Parliament. This may be so but the fact remains, however, according to long established practice, that a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege must be first established.

The hon. member has indicated the terms of the motion which he has proposed to put to the House. It reads as follows:

That the conduct of the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce in publicly making material allegations and purported statements of fact on the 5th September, 1973 relevant to the matters of a question of privilege that were referred by order of this House on the 4th September, 1973 to the Committee on Privileges and Elections for study and report, the said committee not having so reported, is a violation of that order and a contempt of this House, and therefore this House censures the conduct of the member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce.

The purport of the proposed motion is very clear. The hon. member would ask the House to censure an hon. member for a statement made outside the House. On the basis of this motion itself I must find that there is not a *prima facie* case of breach of parliamentary privilege.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Mr. Speaker, I may say without hesitation that I accept the ruling. The Solicitor General (Mr. Allmand) is rather fortunate, for if the House had debated the matter it might have involved the ultimate penalty of imprisonment. He probably would have been on temporary leave of absence in any event.

**Mr. Speaker:** I must say that the Chair is very grateful to the hon. member for Yukon for so graciously accepting the ruling, which I appreciate is perhaps difficult in the

### Old Age Security

circumstances. I am grateful to the hon. member and appreciative of this gracious acceptance of the ruling.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### OLD AGE SECURITY ACT

#### PROVISION FOR QUARTERLY ADJUSTMENT OF PENSION

The House resumed consideration in committee of Bill C-219, to amend the Old Age Security Act—Mr. Lalonde—Mr. McCleave in the Chair.

**The Chairman:** The discussion is on clause 1. The hon. member for Victoria.

**Mr. McKinnon:** Mr. Chairman, when we rose at five o'clock for the consideration of private members' business I had just made the point that it ill becomes the Minister of National Health and Welfare to act as if this government is a great blessing to Canada while at the same time his department has been decreasing research grants for cancer. This kind of action comes from the same coalition that exists in my province of British Columbia on a federal-provincial basis.

In that province the federal Liberals and their soul-mates the NDP can share the blame for the fact that elderly citizens requiring domiciliary care, while in theory coming under government medical coverage, in practice find no coverage and must instead pay \$400 to \$600 per month for private hospital care. Then we have here displayed—and the party to our left must accept 31/140's of the responsibility for the actions of this government—is an uncaring and callous attitude toward the reality of the desperate situation of those elderly people. The party to our left, the NDP, must accept its responsibility for the situation in that they have maintained these incompetents in office.

Let us look at the situation in respect of the small businessmen or women. They are caught in price squeezes which unfortunately are all too often caused by the ineptness of the Liberal-NDP coalition government. I spoke to a feed mill operator last week in Victoria; he had phoned me to say that his feed grain supplies of grade 3 wheat could not be delivered. The Canadian Wheat Board had supplies of this grain in the elevator in Victoria but could only sell it at export market prices. The net result was that this feed mill proprietor faced an increase in cost of feed grain from \$138 a ton to \$200 a ton in one day.

**The Chairman:** Order, please. I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member. The discussion has been pretty far ranging, but generally it has been within the field of welfare and security. I hope the hon. member will be able to bring his remarks more closely to the subject of the bill.

● (2010)

**Mr. McKinnon:** Mr. Chairman, I only strayed to the extent that these bills were produced as a package, as I