

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

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Wednesday, October 4, 1967

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

### HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF MEMBERS OF  
U.K. BRANCH OF COMMONWEALTH  
PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. May I bring to the attention of hon. members the presence in the Speaker's gallery of a very distinguished delegation of parliamentarians from the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland, Jersey Island and the Isle of Man. These distinguished visitors are members of the United Kingdom branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and they are visiting Canada, particularly Ottawa, at the invitation of the Canadian branch of the C.P.A. On behalf of hon. members I extend to them a warm and cordial welcome.

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

[Translation]

### PRIVILEGE

MR. MONGRAIN—INABILITY TO BE HEARD  
DURING RECENT DEBATE

**Mr. J.-A. Mongrain (Trois-Rivières):** Mr. Speaker, I gave you notice this afternoon that I wished to rise on a question of privilege. Here is my grievance. I shall explain it as briefly and serenely as possible.

Mr. Speaker, I sat in on the whole three-day debate on housing. I heard 36 or 37 speeches; I followed with interest, 12 or 13 interventions by the Liberals 14 by the Conservatives 6 by the New Democrats and 2 by the Cr ditistes. I asked that my name be put on the list of speakers six times orally and four times in writing. I got up 23 times to be recognized and yet I have been unable to have my turn.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe I have legitimate grounds for a grievance, because I think I have the same rights as all other members. And, if the objection is made that other members have not spoken, I may say that one day, if I ever contract a marriage of love or reason with one of the parties in the house, it would be for better or for worse, for worse

in that I would let my point of view be stated by the leaders of the party rather than doing it myself when I have the time. That is my grievance, Mr. Speaker.

● (2:40 p.m.)

ABSENCE FROM CHAMBER OF MEMBER FOR  
YUKON

**Mr. Auguste Choquette (Lotbini re):** Mr. Speaker, in accordance with the suggestion you made yesterday on my point of order over the prolonged absences of which the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) has been guilty from August 29, 1966 to September 25, 1967 in accordance with your suggestion, I felt it was more in order to proceed by way of a question of privilege.

I do not wish to quote authors such as Dawson who recalls among others, the case of Sir John A. Macdonald, called to the bar of parliament for failing to seek permission of the house for some of his absences.

I should like instead to view the facts in a modern context and recall that Mr. Robert Stanfield, new leader of the Progressive Conservative party, himself deplored absenteeism in the house, and I agree with him, Mr. Chairman.

The hon. member for Lapointe (Mr. Gr goire), whose interventions are frequent and even fruitful at times, raised a point of order in 1964, under standing order 5, when he asked, with the talent and ability known by all, permission of the house to absent himself, since the debate on the adoption of a distinctive flag was dragging on unduly.

A little later on, in 1965, the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), as reported on page 12,746 of the French version of *Hansard*, also raised a point of order under standing order No. 5 to point out that he expected to be called as a witness before the commissioner and chief justice Fr d ric Dorion, who was presiding at the famous Rivard inquiry. The hon. member for Yukon then referred to standing order 5 as shown on page 12,746 of *Hansard*, saying that if he were called as witness, it would probably be more in order to comply with the provisions of the standing order.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has been systematically absent since August 29,