

No. 156

JOURNALS

OF THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OF CANADA

OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18, 1975

2.00 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS

And a question of privilege having been raised by the honourable Member for Leeds (Mr. Cossitt) to the effect that the statements made by a senior government official interfered with his rights and privileges of performing his duties as a Member of Parliament;

RULING BY MR. SPEAKER

MR. SPEAKER: If there are no other honourable Members who wish to participate in the discussion I might indicate to the honourable Member for Leeds (Mr. Cossitt) who had given the Chair notice of the problem which he has now exposed in more detail, that ordinarily it would be my intention to reserve judgement on the matter for sometime. However, in fairness, I must indicate that as a general proposition nothing that anyone says about the conduct or performance, the speech or contribution of any honourable Member could in general terms be taken as an interference with his right to speak or operate as a Member of the House of Commons. Indeed, far from restricting what the honourable Member has to say about the corporation, its president or its officers, the events rather have stimulated the honourable Member to making further comments. In other words, rather than reserving my ruling, my decision is that I do not see—nor, with respect, do I expect that the honourable Member

sees—that his privileges as a Member of the House of Commons, his right to appear here and participate fully as an active Member of the House, his right to speak or express his opinions, have in any way been interfered with. Nor do I see that his rights would be interfered with by any commentary, editorial writer, speaker, television president, or otherwise throughout the country. No Member is subject to such intimidation, and certainly it does not seem to me that the honourable Member has been intimidated in theory or in fact. Therefore, I do not consider that a question of privilege is involved.

Mr. Isabelle, from the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs, presented the Seventh Report of the Committee, which is as follows:

Pursuant to its Order of Reference of Friday, June 6, 1975, your Committee has considered Bill C-62, An Act to amend the Old Age Security Act, to repeal the Old Age Assistance Act and to amend other Acts in consequence thereof, and has agreed to report it without amendment.