

*Privilege—Mr. Ilesley*

An act to incorporate Quebec North Shore and Labrador Railway Company.

An act for granting to His Majesty certain sums of money for the public service of the financial year ending the 31st March, 1948.

On motion of Mr. Mackenzie the house adjourned at 6.08 p.m.

**Thursday, May 15, 1947**

The house met at three o'clock.

**PRIVILEGE**

MR. ILSLEY—REFERENCE TO STATEMENT OF  
MR. ADAMSON IN DEBATE ON MAY 14

Right Hon. J. L. ILSLEY (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott), and because I was Minister of Finance at the time, I rise on a question of privilege in regard to the charge made yesterday during the budget debate by the hon. member for York West (Mr. Adamson), that the Canadian dollar was restored to parity with the United States dollar last July as the result of pressure from the United States. In brief the hon. member claims to be reliably informed that a deal was made whereby in exchange for placing the Canadian dollar at par with the United States dollar—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. ILSLEY:—the United States administration gave assurance that the British loan would go through.

Mr. FLEMING: I rise to a point of order.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Sit down.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. FLEMING: I contend that this is not a question of privilege. The statement of which the minister complains was made yesterday in the course of a debate which is still current in the house. If something was said which requires correction, that should be done in the course of the debate. It is not a question of privilege.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am of opinion that the statement being made by the Minister of Justice concerns a matter of public importance, and as such would be a matter of privilege.

Mr. FLEMING: With respect, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that even if it is a matter of public importance any such charge should be answered in the course of the debate.

[Mr. Rowe.]

Mr. SPEAKER: I believe it is in the interests of the house—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. I believe it is in the interests of the house and the interests of the public that the correct information should be given by the minister on a question of such importance.

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, there were ministers of the crown in the house yesterday at the time that statement was made, and this is not the time for a statement to be made in reply. It should have been made then.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has no question of privilege. The point of order was raised; I have given my ruling, and I would ask the minister to proceed.

Mr. ILSLEY: The statement made by the hon. member for York West was so absurd on its face that had I been in the house at the time—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. ILSLEY:—which I was not, probably I would not have gone to the trouble of denying it. But to my surprise the statement has received wide publicity in the press and on the radio.

Mr. LENNARD: Rightly so.

Mr. ILSLEY: So, lest someone believe the statement, I wish to deny it forthwith, without any qualifications. I wish to deny that any pressure was at any time exercised upon Canada by the United States or any other country to restore our dollar to parity, or that there was any prior discussion of the proposed action—

Mr. CASE: This is the first explanation you have ever given.

Mr. MACKENZIE: And you don't like it.

Mr. LENNARD: That is all you have to say.

Mr. MACKENZIE: You never have anything to say.

Mr. ILSLEY —with the authorities of the United States or of any other country. The action was taken by the government of Canada, completely on its own initiative, and for good and sufficient reasons, in the interests of the Canadian people as a whole.

It is most unfortunate, in my opinion, that circulation should be given to such mischievous rumours which are totally devoid of any foundation in fact.