

Interim Report on Non-Medical Use of Drugs

wonder, with the publication of this article today, if *Time* was the successful bidder in that endeavour. But it is a fact that *Time* magazine does have a commission report that has so far been denied the people of Canada, and I submit that interferes with the operation of Parliament in its consideration of this matter.

This is a highly moral question, a matter of great concern to the health and psychological well-being of our nation, because the question of drug abuse is slipping through our society at all levels. One does not even need any great connection with those activities at any level of society to know that this is happening, because there are common and regular references in the newspapers to the fact that marijuana is a common companion at some parties held in our middle and upper classes. We know that we have weekend heroin users in our schools, and that LSD and other drugs are readily available at all levels, by all age groups and in all sections of our society.

We can only seek to deal properly and effectively with this question if everything is above board and if the LeDain Commission, for which we had great hopes, provides the basis of an answer that Parliament might give to the people of Canada, not in a partisan way but in an individual and moral way—in the way that Parliament should operate—on a non-partisan basis. That should be our objective—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest to the hon. member that he is now going beyond the terms of the question of privilege which he has raised. He is debating the essence of the matter, and I do not think his intervention should be allowed to continue along these lines. I fully appreciate the interest in what he is saying at the present time, but perhaps we should try to limit this debate to the strictly procedural question.

I wonder, since it is just about six o'clock, whether it would be the desire of the House that we conclude this matter now. I have some doubt whether it would be entirely fair to pursue it much beyond six o'clock, in view of the fact that we are on a supply day. I would therefore suggest to hon. members that we try to dispose of the matter before we rise.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I was simply making my concluding remarks to indicate the necessity of taking some action. One action I hope to propose by way of this

[**Mr. Howard (Skeena).**]

motion, and another is calling for the tabling later this evening, or tomorrow at the latest, of the report itself with or without a policy statement by the government. My motion, based on what I believe to be a proper question of privilege, is as follows:

That this House is of the opinion that the government should conduct an immediate investigation to ascertain how the interim report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Non-Medical Use of Drugs came into the possession of *Time* magazine and to report its findings, either interim or final, to the House not later than June 26, 1970.

Mr. Speaker: If there is no further debate on the point, I am prepared to give a ruling now.

• (6:00 p.m.)

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I would like to add a word or two to what has been said by my colleague from Skeena. I will confine myself strictly to the question of whether Your Honour should find that there is a *prima facie* case of privilege. It does seem to me, Mr. Speaker, without trying to attach blame to any particular group—whether it is the government, some other agency, or what have you—that the fact that this kind of thing happens does interfere with our capacity to do our work as Members of Parliament.

Without quoting all the authorities on privilege, hon. members will realize that this is what privilege is all about, namely, anything that interferes with our right to do our work as Members of Parliament. When this kind of thing happens, I suggest our rights are being interfered with. Therefore it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) has made a proper suggestion, namely, that how this situation arose in this particular case should be investigated; the House should know how it came about. I hope Your Honour will agree that there is a *prima facie* case of privilege in the sense that the functions of Parliament have been interfered with by what has happened.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) for his contribution to this very interesting point. As was indicated by the Chair earlier, the necessary notice was given just about an hour ago and this gave the Chair time to reflect on the question and study the precedents. It also gave the Chair time to come to a conclusion on the very interesting arguments brought forth by the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard), supported by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.