

*Privilege—Miss Bégin*

have provided to the House at this time. I have also indicated to the hon. gentleman that I will be pursuing the investigations and that I am conscious of my responsibilities under the Post Office Act. Now, Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind—and the hon. gentleman has stated this quite clearly—that in my investigations there will, of course, have to be a great deal of interplay as between the Solicitor General and myself. This is exactly the course of action which I propose to pursue.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Yesterday on a point of order respecting the tabling of documents we dealt with a point concerning a document which was referred to by the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) during an intervention a few days ago. He indicated that he had quoted from a document which, in his view, was a public document and that he was prepared to table it if the chair saw no objection. I have, on reflection, concluded that ought not to be an impediment to tabling a public document in the House. I see no impediment, and if the Prime Minister is prepared to table it, the tabling will take place at the earliest possible opportunity.

\* \* \*

**PRIVILEGE**

MISS BÉGIN—REMARKS MADE AT CARLETON UNIVERSITY

**Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, in view of the comments I made in this House yesterday on a question of privilege, and reports in the media of remarks I made at a luncheon discussion with students at Carleton University last Wednesday, November 2, I should like to clarify my position in the debate which has occupied the attention of members.

[*Translation*]

I was the guest of Carleton University students at the Roosters, at lunch time on Wednesday last, November 2. Two months ago, I had accepted this invitation to talk about national unity and discuss this subject with the students.

The first questions asked were about the RCMP. I answered them as honestly as possible, as indeed I did all other questions.

[*English*]

In particular today I should like to take the strongest exception to remarks made by the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent) yesterday, as reported at page 692 of *Hansard*. I regret just having received a note from him, to my extreme surprise since he does not usually consult or inform me, saying that he had to leave to catch a flight. He had this to say:

We on this side of the House could document the allegation of a cover-up, and apart from points we on this side of the House would make, the Minister of National Health and Welfare has provided the best possible argument by saying, as a member of the cabinet, that she thinks they were ignoring their responsibility. I would say that she thinks they were involved in a cover-up in burying their own essential role in this whole mess.

[Mr. Blais.]

First of all, I wish to restate with as much emphasis as I command that I fully support the action of the Solicitor General (Mr. Fox) and the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in dealing with allegations of illegal activities by some members of the RCMP. They have clearly stated that this government does not condone illegal acts on the part of citizens or the police. When such acts came to light, not only were they reported to this House by the Solicitor General, but the cases were referred to the proper provincial authorities, and also to the royal commission which was appointed for the purpose of such investigations.

Some of the university students themselves have suggested on the radio this morning that the comments made by myself, which have appeared in the media, have been taken out of the context of the meeting and have become, in their words, a tempest in a teapot. Indeed, the organizers of the meeting have dissociated themselves from the report which appeared in the university newspaper, *The Charlatan*, and have sent me a telegram to that effect.

The occasion was a very informal exchange of views, and there was certainly no question of my "lashing out" at either the Solicitor General or the Prime Minister. Indeed, the very comment I made concerning illegal acts is one that has been made repeatedly in recent days by the Solicitor General, and I support him.

[*Translation*]

On the other hand, to abstain from criticizing a fellow-member of the cabinet is so elementary one need not dwell on the point.

I therefore want to repeat, Mr. Speaker, that I support wholeheartedly the work and the stands of the Solicitor General (Mr. Fox) whose competence, everyone knows, is undeniable.

[*English*]

In trying to put questions in my own personal perspective during the Carleton luncheon, I turned my mind back to the context of 1973 as I saw it when I was a private member. Perhaps such recollections are denied cabinet minister. If I have overstepped practices either for a cabinet member or for this House, I of course do not hesitate to express my regrets. I have no intention of misleading the House, but rather wished to place the correct interpretation on the thoughts I expressed at Carleton a week ago and in press interviews yesterday. I was speaking from recollection of an informal meeting of some length. Unfortunately, I was not allowed by a commentator of Carleton Radio-News to confirm my recollection with a tape of my remarks. The tape, I understand, has been made available to the media.

Since a member opposite asked me a few minutes ago a question based on the supposed transcript of my remarks, which the hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre) has just given me, a short text which I have seen for the first time, an unidentified object consisting of five pages even though I talked for an hour and a half, I should like to put the record straight.