

Privilege—Mr. W. Baker

Madam Speaker:—or the Trudeau plan, or something of that nature, I would tend to think it is acceptable. However, there is considerable controversy about this and I am researching the matter. I will rule on it when I am ready to rule, but for the time being I would ask the hon. member to respect the parliamentary secretary's sensitivities and refer to the hon. member, when possible, by the name of his constituency. For instance, when quoting, he might have said "the hon. member for Oshawa's contribution", etc.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): I have read the precedents, and, as a matter of fact, I have had an opportunity to discuss this matter informally with the government House leader. I know the hon. member for York East, the Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council (Mr. Collenette), is interested in this matter and I will do my best to abide within what I guess is a temporary ruling until the research has been carried out. I am sure Your Honour was not considering adjourning the House while this research is being carried out. No, I did not think so.

I should like to go back to the argument and identify it for Your Honour. It is a report in *The Globe and Mail* of today, March 27, 1981. I will not read what I read prior to the intervention by the parliamentary secretary, for which I thank him, but I will carry on reading the quotation referring to the hon. member for Oshawa, the Leader of the NDP. It is as follows:

Mr. Broadbent's contribution entitled Comments by the Office of the Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada contains several long passages that turned up again verbatim three days ago when Mr. Chretien tabled an official government reply to the report of the British Parliament's foreign affairs committee, headed by Sir Anthony Kershaw.

The article continues:

Both Mr. Broadbent's and Mr. Chrétien's papers use the same examples and arguments to explain British convention in dealing with the requests from the Canadian Parliament and use nearly identical words to describe their respective interpretations of last September's first ministers' conference:

At this point there is a quotation in the article, which I point out for identification by *Hansard* reporters. It reads:

"Some premiers accepted some of the Prime Minister's proposals, the Prime Minister accepted some of the premiers' proposals, some premiers rejected the proposals of other premiers and some premiers rejected some proposals of the Prime Minister. When a summary of the position of all first ministers on each of the 12 items was made, it became clear that there was not unanimous consent on any of the 12 items, but, as explained above, the reasons for this lack of consensus were many and varied, and blame for the failure to reach consensus cannot be assigned to any single individual."

The only difference is in the last sentence. Everything else in what has been described as the Chrétien paper is exactly the same as what has been described as the Broadbent paper. The only difference—I have to point this out in fairness—is the following:

(The Chrétien document closes by saying "... blame cannot be assigned to anyone").

I should just like to contrast the position taken by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Chrétien), when he deals with the British, with the position taken by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) today in the House of Commons respecting his

attitude toward provincial premiers. It is interesting that the argument when the emissaries, the ambassadors, go off to talk to the foreign government differs from the argument used here in the House of Commons. I know the hon. member for Gatineau (Mr. Cousineau) is blushing at that kind of inconsistency on the part of his leader.

I should like to go on quoting from the article in *The Globe and Mail*. The following does not appear in quotes, let me point out for the benefit of the *Hansard* reporters:

As well, Mr. Broadbent goes on to defend a government memo detailing federal strategy that was leaked during the September conference by noting that "the object of the memorandum was to suggest how best to achieve consensus on as many of the 12 items as possible".

We all know what that memorandum is. It is the memorandum to which that constitutional giant, the hon. member for Oshawa, the Leader of the NDP, referred, and that is the Kirby document, the "dirty tricks" document to which the leader of the NDP referred, in a submission to the British Parliament—he did not make it here—when he said its object was to achieve a consensus. We obviously know what the object of that document was. It becomes exceedingly important because allegations have been made—

An hon. Member: What is your question of privilege?

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):—in Saskatchewan by a member of the Saskatchewan legislature that the NDP paper was written by a federal official, and there was a request made to the attorney general of Saskatchewan to investigate this matter, which is a matter—I hesitate to be unparliamentary—which borders on duplicity.

Madam Speaker, I intend to move a motion at the end of my remarks. The business of assistance given by governments to one political party and not to the other political parties in the House of Commons has been argued—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, I have difficulty because of the noise coming from the little red rump behind me; there seems to be great nervousness down there.

In any case, this issue has come up before in the House of Commons, the issue of the propriety of a government of any stripe giving aid to one political party and denying it to others, and what this does to the sense of fairness which ought to exist in terms of research facilities.

An hon. Member: Tell us about the sense of fairness.

• (1240)

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): My friends ask me to tell them about it. I thank them for the invitation. I will tell them about it, naturally, because that is the issue.

I should like to refer to certain matters which occurred in the House of Commons, starting on November 5, 1979, with the comments of the hon. member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell (Mr. Ethier). By the way, the hon. member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell is not with us today because of illness, for