

Actions of Members of the Press

Mr. Douglas (Bruce): I hope you keep it up.

Following the comments made last night by the hon. member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Caouette) I move, seconded by the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Reid)—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Douglas (Bruce): Would some of you fellows like to do it? The motion reads:

That the questions and accusations raised by the hon. member for Témiscamingue be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections so that comparisons may be made in the attitude and coverage they received by the parliamentary press gallery contrasted with the attitude and coverage given by the parliamentary press gallery to charges recently made by an hon. member of the provincial house of Ontario regarding some members of this House.

● (1110)

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. How could the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Reid) second the motion if he is not in his seat? Oh, touché, Monsieur l'Orateur, he got there while I was speaking.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I looked in that direction when I heard the name of the hon. member who was seconding the motion and just as he was seconding the motion he was leaving his seat, but I thought he was there long enough to comply with the Rule.

Mr. Baldwin: Would Your Honour repeat the motion? We did not quite catch it as the hon. member was interrupted from time to time.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Bruce (Mr. Douglas) moved, pursuant to Standing Order 43, a matter of urgent and pressing necessity:

That the questions and accusations raised by the hon. member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Caouette) be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections so that comparisons may be made in the attitude and coverage they received by the parliamentary press gallery be contrasted with the attitude and coverage given by the parliamentary press gallery to charges recently made by an hon. member of the provincial House of Ontario regarding some members of this hon. House.

An hon. Member: Is that urgent?

An hon. Member: It is perpetual.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have to say that since the matter casts reflections on the practices of some members of the House, and because it is a recent allegation and was raised again last night on a question of privilege, it does have some immediacy. It certainly has importance. Although it may be classified as important, it could be raised in other ways perhaps if hon. members wanted to take objection or wanted to proceed by way of a question of privilege. I have to confess to some reservations about the nature of the pressing necessity and the setting aside of the order of business in order to debate a matter of that sort. In order to be consistent with other rulings I have made, I must say I have doubts that the motion is of pressing necessity.

[Mr. Douglas (Bruce).]

[Translation]

PRIVILEGE

MR. LA SALLE—REFERENCE TO REMARKS OF HON. MEMBER FOR TÉMISCAMINGUE

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I would like to point out that I will readily support the motion in view of what the hon. member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Caouette) said very clearly in his speech last night and I quote:

I wish to say that after two or three days, and after having seen the photograph of the hon. member for Joliette in the newspapers, I asked myself whether perhaps he himself had not helped to pay for the cost of his personal publicity in some of the newspapers of the province, whether it be French or English newspapers.

I feel, Mr. Speaker, that his insinuation is unacceptable in my case. I trust the House will ask the hon. member to be more specific and make his accusations in the public forum and not take shelter behind parliamentary immunity.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member brought up the question of privilege. If other hon. members wish to contribute to the debate, it might perhaps be preferable to delay a final decision and consider this very important matter on Monday.

[English]

Mr. Baldwin: I would just point out, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member for Joliette (Mr. La Salle) having risen now, it might be presumed that he has reserved the right to bring up the matter and move a motion, perhaps on Monday or Tuesday. In that case, he would have to send Your Honour notice. By rising as he has now in respect of the allegation which he has charged appear to have been made against him, he has, I believe taken the proper course, and has reserved his right to make a motion later.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. As I have endeavoured to indicate to the hon. member, I take it he has raised a question of privilege at this time personally. I would prefer to reserve on it. This is a matter of some importance and I could perhaps make a decision on Monday. If other members want to make a contribution to the point they might be prepared to do so on Monday.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES TO BE PRESENTED MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1974

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the House could revert to motions. I should like to ask for a special order to deal with the supplementary estimates to be introduced on Monday.

Mr. Speaker: Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, it will be recalled that yesterday I said, in connection with the government's decision not to press forward before the end of the fiscal year with