

assume there would be consent of the House to allow the hon. member to state his question at the present time. This would obviate interrupting the hon. member who is about to start his speech. He will have an opportunity to make his contribution, without being interrupted, after we have disposed of the question of privilege.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

• (5:50 p.m.)

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question of privilege is based upon an article in *Time* magazine which apparently reached the newsstands this afternoon after Orders of the Day had been completed. Thus, this is the first opportunity I have had to raise the matter. If it had not been for the requirement of giving one hour's notice we would have been able to raise it earlier than now.

The article in *Time* magazine, which ranges over six pages, complete with pictures and the like, contains a number of what are purported to be—and I do not doubt their truthfulness—direct quotations from the interim report of the LeDain Commission of Inquiry into the Non-Medical use of Drugs in Canada. Even though that report has been kept as an inner cabinet, confidential document up until now, there have been rumours and expressions in the news field about the contents of the report—but none so extensive as those which appear in *Time* magazine.

Those rumours and the discussions which have revolved around what the LeDain Commission interim report might have contained have been in themselves sufficient to hamper Parliament in the proper and full prosecution of its concern for the question which the commission studied. However, I submit that the question of privilege is primarily that *Time* magazine, in its article which ranges, as I have said, over six pages, gives extensive quotations from the report itself, paraphrases other parts of the report and makes references to minority reports in it and the like, in itself totally interferes with the work of Parliament and makes it at this stage virtually impossible for Parliament, thoroughly and properly, to take any action it would like to take with respect to that report.

If, for the sake of argument, the government wants even at this stage to maintain the confidentiality of the report, if questions are asked about it the government is in the position of not being able to answer, of not being

able to make comments about items that appear in the press, and the like. I submit that this is interference. If I could briefly put on the record a few direct quotations from the article in *Time* magazine, it may assist the Chair in coming to a conclusion about the matter of privilege. The article starts off, right in its first paragraph, with a quotation as follows:

We believe that the emphasis must shift...from a reliance on suppression to a reliance on the wise exercise of freedom of choice.

The next paragraph says:

So states the interim report of Ottawa's Commission of Inquiry into the Non-Medical use of Drugs in Canada.

It goes on, in this first page, to say about the commission:

It recommends that possessing or trafficking in either drug remain on the books as a crime, but that the offence be removed from the Narcotic Control Act under which a youngster who offers a friend a joint of pot can, theoretically, face up to life imprisonment—

The commission further recommends that criminal records for drug offences be destroyed after two years.

Here is another direct quotation:

—"one of the major problems involved in the non-medical use of drugs." Says the report—

Then there is another quotation, and so on. I do not wish to give more extensive quotations than these from the first page, nor to go on into the article itself. Based upon those quotations I would offer a motion to the House, if it is found that there is a question of privilege and that the publication *Time* magazine, with the extracts in it from the LeDain Commission report and other factors inherent in the article, interferes with the proper functioning of Parliament. My motion seeks to attach no blame to the government or to anyone else, but simply to have an inquiry or investigation into how *Time* magazine came to acquire this particular report.

We know that in the news field, Mr. Speaker, it is not uncommon for organizations, magazines, newspapers, television stations and the like to try to obtain what in the trade are called scoops and exclusive articles or items, and to obtain them by way of offering money, which often gives them prior and exclusive access to a particular document. Four or five months ago I heard rumours—that is all they were at that time—that *Time* magazine, among others, made offers of pretty substantial amounts of money to acquire the exclusive rights to the interim report. I just