

No. 184

# JOURNALS

OF THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OF CANADA

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1973

2.00 o'clock p.m.

## PRAYERS

The honourable Member for St. John's East, having raised a question of privilege concerning the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates;

## RULING BY MR. SPEAKER

MR. SPEAKER: I thank the honourable Member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) who, in accordance with the Standing Orders, gave notice of his intention to raise this matter by way of a question of privilege. As is usual and traditional in such a case, the Chair gave the honourable Member whose conduct is being questioned the opportunity to answer briefly. I am therefore ready to make a ruling. The ruling that the Chair must make is simply to determine whether there is a *prima facie* question of privilege requiring a motion which would then be put to the vote. If the motion were agreed to by the House, it would then naturally be referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

In view of the precedents, the Standing Orders of the House and the books pertaining to the proceedings of the House to which I have referred, I doubt whether it would be possible for the Chair to say that there is a *prima facie* question of privilege.

The notice or the explanation suggests that the Chairman of the Committee the honourable Member for Laurier (Mr. Leblanc) adjourned the Committee sitting at five o'clock yesterday thus preventing the honourable Member for St. John's East from asking on a point of order that the sitting be extended beyond five o'clock. The honourable Member further states that as a consequence of that action he was denied an opportunity to oppose an item in the supplementary estimates which concerns the Canadian Radio-Television Commission.

The honourable Member has taken exception to these proceedings and would move that the conduct of the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

As honourable Members know, it is not the first time that certain aspects of proceedings in committees have been brought to the attention of the House by way of a question of privilege. I refer honourable Members, for example, to rulings reported in the *Votes and Proceedings* for January 12, 1972, and to another occasion in *Hansard*, on another occasion, of Friday, March 3, 1967 at page 13697.