

Question of Privilege

organisation—namely the International Institute of Finance Officers—makes the charge even more serious and casts even greater doubts upon the integrity of all members of parliament, who would be accused of collusion in such an odious action. The possible repercussions of the whole thing must be kept in mind.

Mr. Speaker, if the government is guilty of such a vile action, it no longer deserves the confidence of the house and I cannot imagine any member who would still be willing to put his trust in it. If not, then Mr. MacKinnon should agree to explain or correct his statement which may have gone beyond his thoughts. And that is why I move, seconded by Mr. Latulippe, that:

The committee on finance, trade and economic affairs, or any other committee empowered to deal with the matter, should meet as soon as possible to summon Mr. Neil J. MacKinnon, president of the Imperial Bank of Commerce, and to enjoin him to justify and specify the charges he made against the government and indirectly against parliament as a whole in a speech delivered at an international conference of the Financial Executives Institute when he said:

And here I quote him verbatim.

Mr. Speaker, I am sending you copies in French and in English of those two documents and I repeat that, in my opinion, this is a serious attack against the integrity and honesty of parliament as a whole which finds itself accused of complicity in a deliberately fraudulent action, which would not be so otherwise, since there is talk of swindle and trickery.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I do not think that the hon. member's grievance—and I insist on the word "grievance"—is acceptable as a question of privilege. The hon. member is well aware of the provisions of section 110 of Beauchesne's fourth edition, which I quote:

Any libel reflecting upon any member of the house for or relating to his service therein was a high violation of the rights and privileges of the house. But to constitute a breach of privilege, a libel upon a member must concern his character or conduct in his capacity as a member and the conduct or language on which the libel is based must be actions performed or words uttered in the actual transaction of the business of the house.

The remarks complained of by the hon. member relate more particularly to the government, in my opinion, than to the personal conduct of members in the transaction of their business and in their responsibilities in the house. For that reason, I do not think that this question is acceptable and that the motion presented by the member for Trois-Rivières can be accepted.

[Mr. Mongrain.]

Mr. Mongrain: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. May I add a word?

I find it a little strange that when the integrity and honesty of all the hon. members are concerned—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member cannot discuss a ruling of the Chair on a point of order.

MR. CHOQUETTE—FRENCH CANADIAN REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENTARY PRESS GALLERY

Mr. Auguste Choquette (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I rose on a question of privilege in order to point out that the French staff in the press gallery is numerically deficient.

There are only two French speaking reporters out of a total of more than 20, which affects the privileges of the members of this house in the following way. All too often, newspaper reports of speeches made in French in the house are based on a translation which is not always faithful as to the basic content of the speech.

The purpose of my question of privilege is to urge the authorities concerned to correct a hardly acceptable anomaly and to increase the French services of the Canadian Press.

Mr. Speaker: Order. There is obviously no question of privilege there. The hon. member recognizes it himself, I am sure, since he did not see fit to follow up his intervention with a motion. May I remind him of the provisions of citation 113 of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, fourth edition:

Members often raise so-called "questions of privilege" on matters which should be dealt with as personal explanations or corrections, either in the debates or the proceedings of the house. A question of privilege ought rarely to come up in parliament.

[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF DELEGATION OF POLISH PARLIAMENTARIANS

Mr. Speaker: May I bring to the attention of hon. members the presence in the Speaker's gallery of a very distinguished delegation of Polish parliamentarians. For the last week these distinguished colleagues have been our guests in Canada while visiting various parts of the country. It is my hope, and I am sure the hope of all members of the house, that our visiting colleagues will have received in Canada the same warm hospitality which