

Administration of Justice

against parliament. To such a confrontation I suggest there can be only one end. Parliament must and will remain supreme in the adjudication of its own privileges. The minister has the obligation now to end the matter by rising in his place, specifying his charges, substantiating those charges, or he has an obligation under our time honoured practices to resign his seat.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Brand: Mr. Speaker, I feel as a new member of the house that I must make a few comments on the events of the last few days on this point of privilege. I must say that I have been amazed and shocked at what I have seen. The spectacle of a minister of the Crown, heading one of the most important portfolios in the government, making wild and unsubstantiated charges and refusing to stand up in his place and substantiate them, and as a result leaving every Privy Councillor of the former government and, indeed, every member of the house under a cloud is shocking.

I am sure, although I am not a member of the legal profession, that it would be very difficult indeed to lay any information in a court without specifying against whom you are laying the information. Yet here, in what is supposed the highest court in our land, we are faced with this incredible spectacle.

Mr. McIlraith: Lay a charge.

Mr. Brand: I wonder if the Minister of Justice (Mr. Cardin) realizes what he is doing to our country, to the house, and to the honour that this house has had over these many years in our history. I submit that the responsibility for what is happening falls on his shoulders.

This man, in a moment of petulance, brought the business of government and the affairs of a nation to a halt. Then, I hear some members to my left blaming it on the party which I represent. It is inconceivable to me that this sort of thing can happen in this country. I am sorry indeed to have to say that the minister has sowed the wind and not only this parliament but the people of Canada will reap the whirlwind. I say it is up to him now to stand up in his place like a man and make the specific accusations; make them now before the nation, before this parliament.

● (5:50 p.m.)

The idea of having a judicial inquiry which may drag on for a long time and leave a

cloud of sexual involvement with this alleged spy over the Privy Councillors, is something which is incomprehensible to me. I think there is a very serious charge here that has to be abrogated by the minister. I think it is up to him now, not next week or next month, to stand up like a man, face his peers, and make his accusations.

Mr. Knowles: Six o'clock.

Mr. Nugent: Mr. Speaker, after listening to the hon. members for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette) and Red Deer (Mr. Thompson) today, I do feel that members in this house perhaps were not listening very well when we had what I thought was a very good contribution to the debate from the hon. member for Regina City. Certainly, he gave us a complete rebuttal to the suggestion of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Works when they tried to tell the house that the inquiry is the answer.

I point out also to the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam that he would not be so eager to hear about an inquiry if he had listened to the hon. member for Regina City. I believe there is more than one point of privilege in this case. I can well understand the minister wanting to investigate his own charge that the Leader of the Opposition, when Prime Minister, was guilty of improperly handling a case. Certainly, that is an allegation against one man, and the sort of thing, I suppose, which, if taken seriously, would be a proper subject for a board of inquiry. However, we also have the allegations that members of this house were involved. This is the question of privilege with which we have been dealing.

I have thought, Mr. Speaker, throughout the debate that perhaps the question of an inquiry was out of order really. What this house must deal with, and what we have been trying to deal with, is a question of privilege. It is true that two or three motions which we have presented have been ruled out of order. I had one more ready, but my colleagues advised me it was much the same as the others, and likely would be out of order too.

Merely because we are having a little procedural difficulty in finding the right motion to deal with the matter does not make it any less necessary for the house to deal with the question of privilege. I submit that the house now, if it wished to vote for the inquiry which the Prime Minister is talking about, would still be left with this question of