

Questions of Privilege

How the right hon. gentleman can construe those statements now as being wholehearted support of the government's policy on aboriginal rights is beyond me. I had contemplated moving a motion, but if, at any time a motion were to be moved referring to a committee the matter of misrepresentation by the Prime Minister or other members of the government, it would be a very busy committee indeed that would be handling the issues.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I doubt whether there ought to be any debate at all.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

The Chair is required to determine whether there is a prima facie case of privilege. However, it is traditional and according to practice to allow another hon. member whose statements have been brought into the question of privilege to comment briefly on the statement made in order to make it easier for the Chair to rule. The difficulty here, of course, is that there is no motion and, in any event, the eventual ruling would be that there is no question of privilege. At the same time, I suppose the hon. member who has been brought into the discussion will probably rise to claim his own privilege and would have to be recognized for that purpose.

Therefore I think it is good practice to allow the member who has been brought into a question of privilege to reply briefly, and then the Chair will make its ruling.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the authorization you have given me. I will not abuse it but will do the same as the hon. member for Peace River did, read from the debates of June 25, 1969, but quote paragraphs different from those quoted by the hon. member for Peace River. This statement was made by the hon. member on behalf of his party near the beginning of his remarks:

• (1430)

Many of the thoughts which the minister expressed in his statement were good thoughts, repeating the thoughts in the report of the committee.

We welcome the statement by the minister. It amounts to an acceptance of many proposals made by the Indian people through the years, and made by those who have worked on their behalf, in this party and elsewhere.

He goes on at some length, but I will go to the paragraph from which the hon. member just quoted, the one that talks of aboriginal rights. This is followed by the phrase I believe he read.

There are bound to be some very serious problems about who has the right to be consulted and the fullness of the consultation. By and large this must be regarded as a welcome statement and a step forward toward equality for the Indian people of Canada.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if the red herring is not one created by the hon. member.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Mr. Baldwin.]

Mr. Trudeau: If the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) wants to argue the point, I also have something on what he has had to say.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would rather not bring the hon. member for Skeena into the discussion. Obviously this is a matter of dispute between two members of the House as to a statement of fact. In any event, it is clear that a dispute as to facts cannot be the basis for a question of privilege. Again I have to refer to the fact there is no motion proposed so that facilitates the task of the Chair.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege because my name, position and the statement I made on that date have been brought into the matter. The rules prevent me from reading my own statement of June 25 in its entirety. Unlike the Prime Minister or the hon. member for Peace River, I will not extract pieces to support a particular contention. I simply suggest it be read in its entirety and it will be seen that what the Prime Minister said yesterday with regard to what I said—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Caouette (Charlevoix): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 43, I request the unanimous consent of the House with a view to discussing an issue which cannot be delayed any longer.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the hon. member resume his seat? I apologize to the hon. member but I am under the impression that he wants to move a motion under Standing Order 43. Perhaps it would be more suitable if the Chair allowed the hon. member to move this motion later when motions are called.

[English]

MR. GLEAVE—ANSWER OF MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR WHEAT BOARD CONCERNING AGREEMENT WITH RAILWAYS ON USE OF HOPPER CARS

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege with regard to an answer the minister in charge of the Wheat Board gave me on January 15. At that time I asked him whether the two major railroads, the CPR and CNR, had agreed to bear certain charges with regard to depreciation and the cost of operation of certain hopper cars that the government had purchased. His answer was that there was such an agreement and he would provide it. Yesterday I was informed in committee that such an agreement did not yet exist. I think the minister owes an explanation to me and the House and should give more complete information than he gave at that time. I would not charge the minister with a deliberate attempt to mislead the House, but I do think his statement was incomplete. I would, therefore, ask that he correct it at the earliest opportunity.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I do not think this would be the time for the minister to make a further statement. Perhaps he could do this on motions or, if the hon. member wishes, he can take the opportunity provided by the question period to ask a further question when we