

Excise Tax Act Amendment

but he gave his reasons for it, and cited parliamentary precedents for it. And if my hon. friends will turn to page 5, they will find he said this:

We are as anxious as anyone else to discuss this question as soon as we can, but I should like the house and the public to realize that these measures are now in effect as a result of that decision. They are just as much in effect as the decisions of the government brought down in the budget delivered by the Minister of Finance in which he says in effect, "These proposals will come into effect tonight though the bill dealing with them may not be passed for a couple of months."

I suggest—

Mr. ROSS (Souris): Go on; go on.

The CHAIRMAN: Order.

Mr. CLEAVER: I don't blame them, Mr. Chairman, at all.

Mr. FLEMING: Page 5.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member should not be interrupted.

Mr. GARDINER: What is the matter with Charles I now?

Mr. CLEAVER: It is a pretty bitter pill; I don't blame them for kicking about it.

Mr. FLEMING: First column, page 5.

Mr. CLEAVER: Then, from that day forward, until—

Mr. MERRITT: I rise to a question of privilege.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Sit down.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Privilege.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): A question of privilege, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Order. If I must interpret the rules strictly, a question of privilege can be raised only when the house is in the house. I must ask hon. members to allow the hon. member for Halton to continue for the very few moments left this evening, and to continue without interruption.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): Let him be fair, then.

Mr. CLEAVER: Following on from there; from that day forward, until December 19, there was no mention of the Excise Act, except the facetious question in regard to pig bristles asked by the hon. member for Calgary West.

Mr. MERRITT: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, can we not have a point of order in committee?

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order. It should not be necessary to remind hon. members that when a member has the floor he

[Mr. Cleaver.]

should not be interrupted unless he consents to answer a question. And if he wishes to answer the question, he will so indicate by taking his seat. It is not proper to keep on interrupting an hon. member when he has the floor.

Mr. MERRITT: I rise to a point of order.

Some hon. MEMBERS: No.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I would ask the hon. member to let the hon. member—

Mr. BRACKEN: He has raised a point of order.

Mr. ABBOTT: You are killing time.

Mr. MERRITT: Perhaps it would be well to let me state my point of order.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Sit down.

Mr. MERRITT: The hon. member for Halton has said, on his responsibility as a member, that on December 5 the leader of the opposition made no statement about the constitutional aspects of the matter.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Sit down.

Mr. MERRITT: Mr. Chairman, on page 5 I read these words—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. MERRITT:

Already these policies have—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. MERRITT:

—I was going to say, murdered the constitution and shamefully flouted parliament.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member wishes to raise that point and speak on it, he has that opportunity in this committee as soon as the hon. member takes his seat.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Eleven o'clock.

Mr. GREEN: Eleven o'clock.

Mr. CLEAVER: Then, Mr. Chairman—

Mr. GREEN: Eleven o'clock.

The CHAIRMAN: Order; shall I report progress and ask leave to sit again?

Progress reported.

PRIVILEGE

MR. BRACKEN—REFERENCE TO STATEMENT IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Mr. JOHN BRACKEN (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I rise to a question of privilege.