

Reference to Statement by Prime Minister

the truth. It is contrary to the truth because it is contrary to what actually happened at every stage.

As background to what I wish to say in this respect let me read what the Prime Minister said as reported on page 8 of this transcript:

I know what Monday night is like. Nobody thought there was going to be a vote.

I can only put this down, in generous excuse for the Prime Minister, to the fact that he was not here on Monday; he was holidaying in Jamaica.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Fulton: That is a statement of fact. The Prime Minister was not here on Monday; he was holidaying in Jamaica. But he was telephoned in Jamaica at 6 p.m. on Monday, so he tells us, according to the transcript, and was told that everything was quiet; everything was under control. This was the message he received in Jamaica at 6 p.m. according to his own testimony, after the government had narrowly avoided defeat in a vote that afternoon by a majority of 3. Everything was quiet. Everything was under control.

Mr. Speaker, this was no snap vote. This was no trick. Members did not suddenly spring out from behind the curtains. Contrary to the Prime Minister's statement that no vote was expected, this is what occurred. We in the opposition opposed this measure at every stage. We opposed the budget last November, when we voted against it. We voted against the income tax bill on second reading, contrary to the impression left by the Prime Minister in the course of his broadcast. We voted against it in committee on Monday; as I have said, on Monday afternoon the government narrowly avoided defeat in a vote of 65 to 62. On Monday evening it was the government which called for third reading.

There was no surprise. I am outlining here the course of events as they actually happened in order to demonstrate the extent of the untruths contained in the Prime Minister's statement and, therefore, the extent of the slander upon members of this house and the extent of the breach of the privileges of this house.

Contrary to what the Prime Minister said, it was perfectly clear that there would be a vote on third reading. And let me point out that we did not call the third reading, nor was it sprung upon the government by surprise. Indeed, under the normal practice of this house, when second reading has taken

[Mr. Fulton.]

place on a previous day and on another day the house completes committee stage, it is normal to go on at once with third reading. But the matter still rested within the control of the government. They could have deferred third reading if they had wished. But they did not; they called the third reading stage, which we accepted, and the opposition voted on third reading, and that is the way the government came to be defeated on Monday evening last.

The opposition voted knowing full well what was the effect and the implication of their vote, and one must assume that the government accepted the vote also knowing full well what was the implication of the vote. So it is contrary to the truth when the Prime Minister says that no one expected a vote on Monday night. It is contrary to the truth when the Prime Minister says this was a species of trickery. It is contrary to the truth when the Prime Minister says this is a manufactured crisis. At least it is certainly contrary to the truth when he implies it was manufactured by anybody else but the government itself.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Fulton: So, sir, this being the situation I submit to you that the only course that can properly be followed now is for this house to take the matter under advisement, and to do so in realization of the fact that the members of the house have been slandered, the proceedings of the house have been called into question by words of the Prime Minister of Canada himself, the first member of this house, reflecting upon its proceedings; and I suggest to the Prime Minister that he be careful of his use of language, because if there is any trickery whatsoever involved here the trickery is in the backhanded, extraordinary and deceitful motion placed on the notice paper yesterday by the right hon. gentleman himself.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Fulton: Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Harkness):

That the words used by the right hon. the Prime Minister on a C.B.C. national television interview broadcast on February 21st, 1968, to wit:

"That's the way elections should be brought about. Not by this kind of trickery situation last Monday night."

"Are you going to let these people manoeuvre you by this kind of trickery into a general election at this particular time?"