

I would also bring to the attention of the Chair that it is your duty, Sir, only to find a prima facie case, not to determine the matter. If Your Honour finds that there is a prima facie case of breach of privilege, and Members opposite have surely indicated with their own words that there is a prima facie case, then with the greatest of respect to the Chair it is your duty, Sir, to refer the matter to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections so that it may be investigated and so that a judgment on the Members' conduct can be made followed by censure or absolution.

To you, Mr. Speaker, I say enough of this nonsense. I honestly submit that Your Honour should refer the matter and let us be done with it.

**Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands):** Mr. Speaker, surely what we are dealing with here is a question of form and of proper procedure rather than a question of privilege. I would ask you, Sir, if you would investigate the rulings, and if there were not rulings then at least the requests, of former Speaker Mr. Lloyd Francis concerning a number of petitions presented in a similar manner by members of the New Democratic Party concerning the Crow issue. I believe at that time we were requested not to read out petitions but, rather, to summarize them, giving the gist of them. I ask Your Honour to review the earlier rulings and requests of a former Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Annapolis Valley—

**Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley—Hants):** Mr. Speaker, it is obvious I should rise more often in the Chamber if Your Honour has a form of amnesia concerning the riding I represent.

Quite frankly, I was here this morning when these petitions were presented. I understand the reasons that they were presented. Frankly, I was amazed that someone representing the leadership of my Party did not rise, not to protest the first protest raised, but to protest the editorial comments concerning the petitions. I do not have to read the "blues", although they have been referred to. As far as I am concerned, I agree with my friend, the Hon. Member for North Vancouver—Burnaby (Mr. Cook). It is not the "blues" with which we are concerned but the fact that any person watching these proceedings will be totally blue and depressed at what has taken place here during the last half-hour. Not one Member, other than the Hon. Member for Victoria (Mr. McKinnon), referred to the Standing Order concerning petitions, which is Standing Order 106. In particular I refer to Standing Order 106(2) which states that every petition shall contain a clear, proper and respectful prayer. How in the devil can one have a respectful prayer if a great many editorial pejoratives are put forward?

The other point I wish to make is that Standing Order 106(6) states that Members presenting petitions shall be answerable that they do not contain impertinent or improper matter.

I think Your Honour should consider this issue so that we can avoid this type of farce in the future. This will ensure that petitions will be factual and that editorial comments from

Hon. Members will not be permitted, in which case the petition should not be read.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Chair has listened carefully to the representations, some reflective and some vigorous, which Hon. Members have made. It is appropriate for me to consider the matter with some care and return to the Chamber at an appropriate time.

The Chair is also concerned about the issue raised by the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme). Certainly, the practice at one time was very clear. Use of the "blues" was not to be made in the Chamber. At one time the "blues" were not to be given to another Member until the Member involved had a chance to scan the record. That is probably a matter that ought to be discussed among Members since with electronic recording that particular practice may not be as acutely necessary as perhaps it once was. However, the Chair is not making any ruling or decision on that point but indicates that through the appropriate process I will ask Hon. Members to discuss the matter further.

With respect to the debate on this issue, it is important that members of the public who watch the proceedings of the Chamber ought to realize that the Hon. Member for Victoria (Mr. McKinnon) raised what was a perfectly appropriate point of order. It was not a question of privilege but a point of order. The point of order is that he feels that those presenting petitions earlier in the day had said more about them and more about the contents of them than was in fact contained in them. That is the issue that is before the Chair. That is the issue that the Chair will consider. After having carefully considered the petitions and what was said, and if it is the sense in fact that the introductory remarks went beyond what the Hon. Member for Annapolis Valley—Hants (Mr. Nowlan) clearly points out are strict words in the rules, then the Chair will rule accordingly.

I thank Hon. Members for their interventions. I know that the Hon. Members who presented petitions this morning are reflecting views that Canadians have expressed to them. These petitions are most appropriately brought to the Chamber. Those views, of course, must be vigorously espoused, as I think all Members will agree they were. The question is, was some of that vigour earlier today, perhaps on occasion, excessive? The Chair will consider that matter and come back to the Chamber to rule on the matter. I thank all Hon. Members for their interventions.

#### APPROPRIATENESS OF QUESTIONS—MATTERS BEFORE COMMITTEE

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on another point of order. While you are reflecting on the previous issue, I ask you to consider something that has been developing over the past little while with regard to questions asked in the House that have a bearing on committee work that is going on. Citation 357 of Beauchesne's Fifth Edition clearly outlines certain limitations on the putting of questions. I quote from the citation which states: