

about the most serious one which has come up in this session of Parliament.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: The laughter over there only shows how serious it is. If a minister of the government writing to people in a member's district saying that he has now been given the responsibility of representing that district is not a breach of the privileges of the members of this House, then I fail to see that we have any privileges whatsoever; we have none.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: The hon. member for Broadview-Greenwood (Mr. Rae) is the Member of Parliament for that district. He has been sworn in to this House. For a cabinet minister to write people in his district pretending that somehow he is responsible for the district is beyond belief. Then to give the excuse in this House that this is the case because the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), the imperial potentate, asked him to take on that responsibility, not only for a Member of Parliament in the opposition but for Members of Parliament of his own party, is also beyond belief. Members of the Liberal Party will have a cabinet minister holding them by the hand and telling people in their districts that he is responsible for their district, and when a letter goes out with money for a group in the district, that the Liberal member cannot be trusted in his own district. Adult, intelligent members over there laugh about it and think it is an hilarious practice, one that is all to the good of Canada. If that is not prostitution of the democratic process, what are we seeing?

I have been involved in provincial politics, and I always thought that federal politics were on a higher level. But I was quickly disabused of that when I came here and saw how members of the government opposite operate.

I have an example in my own district. I will raise a question of privilege tomorrow with respect to the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy), who tossed aside all the rules and regulations of his own community services program and gave a grant of \$25,000 to a project which was ranked as No. 56 in order of priority of 67 projects which were not financed. Because a provincial Liberal member of the House of Assembly spoke to the cabinet minister who is supposed to be responsible for Newfoundland—the “cabinet minister irresponsible for Newfoundland”—the hon. member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador (Mr. Rompkey), they advanced \$25,000 of government funds and ignored their own department and the advisory board. A project which got .23 points out of a score of nine received an additional \$25,000 not included under the program, nor recommended by the department or by the local advisory board. If this is not a scummy way for a minister of the government to operate, if this is not even scummier, if the minister's explanation is not the lowest we have heard, I do not know what is. There is a prima facie case for this matter to go to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections to see if we have any rights with

respect to this government. Or will the tyranny of the majority rule hereafter?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, obviously this is not a prima facie case of privilege. No regulation or statute has been breached. No directive has been violated. So, obviously it is a difference of opinion. This debate comes at a very bad time because for a while we believed that the opposition was serious in their wish to see the debate on the Constitution of Canada proceed normally and without undue delay. Madam Speaker, this is a silly and continued question meant to delay unduly the debate on the Constitution, and I ask you to dismiss it as such.

● (1540)

[*English*]

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. If I heard you correctly, Madam Speaker, just before the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie) stood up on his point of order you said you would hear one more member. I thought that member was the hon. member for St. John's West. Following his intervention there was another intervention. Therefore, I claim my right to intervene as well.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Madam Speaker, this House has been insulted today. It is an absolute disgrace that a minister of the Crown, who has taken an oath to uphold the rules of the House and to observe the rules of democracy and proper behaviour in this country, should have the arrogance to write a letter such as he wrote and to sign it. I can imagine someone writing the letter but not the minister signing it. It is an abuse of power. I suggest that the suggestion made by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) about there being constituency offices established in other ridings through public funding should be referred to the Auditor General for examination and report. I make the motion here and now that the matter be referred to the Auditor General for examination and report.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rae: On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: I will hear the hon. member on his point of order.

Before I do that I want to explain to the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Munro) that I did say I would hear another person on this side of the House.

Some hon. Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I said I would hear another intervenor. Then no one on this side rose, but I usually give a chance to