

*Privilege—Mr. Robinson*

presented by a crook, by someone that has admitted his wrongdoing, and to all Canadians.

I would suggest that that argument, that somehow we have to wait until all appeals have been expired, is utterly without foundation. The Minister of Justice has no precedent for that. To the extent that there are precedents, I would draw to Your Honour's attention Citation 39 of Beauchesne's. I quote:

It is not necessary for the courts to come to a decision before the House acts. In 1891 charges were laid in the House against Thomas McGreevy relating to scandals in the Public Works Department. The Committee on Privileges and Elections examined the evidence and concluded that the charges were amply proven.

A parliamentary committee, Mr. Speaker. They had not even ruled in the courts, and there certainly had not been a guilty plea by the Member of Parliament himself. I continue:

Mr. McGreevy meanwhile had submitted his resignation—The House judged Mr. McGreevy to be guilty of a contempt—as well as certain of the charges and ordered his expulsion.

To the extent precedents exist, they state that of course this House is the master of its own proceedings and in certain circumstances could even move before charges have even been finalized, before a verdict. I am not suggesting that that is an appropriate course to take, but surely that effectively puts the lie to the suggestion that this House must stand impotent and paralyzed until the Member has exhausted every possible avenue of appeal.

There is no problem with the suggestion that the House must be technically informed, that the judge in question must technically inform the House of the conviction. The Hon. Member has an opportunity to appear under Standing Order before this House to make his case. If he wants to suggest that all of the suggestions that he has pleaded guilty are somehow a mass of fiction, he can do so at the time. If he wants to suggest that he did not plead guilty to fraud and abuse of trust, he can do so when he appears. That technical requirement clearly should not be a bar to the finding on the fundamental question of a prima facie case of breach of privilege.

In closing, I say yes, of course, I would have preferred and indeed all Members of this House would have preferred the Hon. Member for Chambly to do the honourable thing. He has not done that.

Our second preference, and I agree with the House Leader for the Official Opposition in this, would be for the Government, for the Prime Minister, to show leadership, to table a motion before this House calling for the expulsion of this Member.

We are left in a situation in which the Member has refused to resign so far, in which the Government has abdicated its responsibility in this area in terms of a former Conservative colleague. Unless in these circumstances Your Honour finds a prima facie case of privilege, we are not able to deal with a case of admitted corruption in this House of Commons. That would be to the discredit of this House. It would be to the shame of this House, and certainly the people of Canada would not accept that.

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I rise not to reiterate my argument but to expand on my citation if my hon. friend wishes. When I cited *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada* by Joseph Maingot and cited at page 181, I thought that would be sufficient for my hon. friend. Obviously, the citations are there and available if he wishes to pursue it.

I think the most relevant case that we have in this particular House of Commons is the case of Fred Rose, where the Speaker tabled court judgments in connection with the imprisonment of Fred Rose for conspiracy. That was after all appeals had been exhausted. That was the precedent that I was pointing to and referring to in the actual citation of Mr. Maingot.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Burnaby—Kingsway has raised by way of a question of privilege the propriety of the House moving to expel the Hon. Member for Chambly.

The Hon. Member for Windsor West has intervened and assisted the Chair. The Hon. Minister of Justice has replied. I thank Hon. Members for their references which they have given me. It will not come as a surprise to Hon. Members to know that the Speaker has already considered a lot of the background material in this case. However, the arguments were nonetheless of help to the Chair. I thank Hon. Members for that.