

*Privilege—Mr. Oberle*

**Mr. Oberle:** Madam Speaker, I respect your concern and I understand your anxiety. Nevertheless, I will have to lay before you some of the groundwork so that you can see what is at stake. In this case a minister of the Crown chose to discuss a certain matter, which was considered by a city and a region of our country to be of the highest priority, only with a person who was a friend of the Liberal Party. The minister's secretary would not allow me or my colleague from Prince George-Bulkley Valley to lay the case before him. In fact, I insisted that I see the minister and threatened his secretary with public exposure. I was able to see the minister and I pointed out to him that he does have a mandate to build community college residences. Indeed, he or his department has just recently given approval to the building of a college residence in Vancouver. Surely that is proof of that mandate. I found the minister to be quite co-operative and excited about the project. I am looking ahead in the next week or so to a favourable response from the minister's office.

• (1730)

The minister was denied proper information that could only be given by a Member of Parliament, through restricting himself, or instructing his secretaries and the people around him to keep members of Parliament away, only talking to Liberal friends or twins, or whatever they call them, who are now asserting themselves in a serious way in public business throughout the country.

I wanted to tell you this because I am now coming to the basis of my question of privilege which involves a former president of the treasury board, the Hon. Robert Andras. This matter involves him and other former ministers—and I hope to demonstrate this to you very clearly—in that they have seriously injured, fractured and offended the most basic conflict of interest guidelines this House has the right to have respected and adhered to.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. If some ministers or other members have not lived withing the conflict of interest guidelines, that is not a matter of personal privilege which the hon. member should present at this time. If he has any indication of that, he can pursue the matter on other occasions, make a charge, or follow whatever procedure he feels he has at his disposal in order to make that point before the public and before the House.

The hon. member has now been speaking for 12 minutes and he has not spoken at all of anything which is remotely related to a question of privilege. Hon. members want me to abide strictly by the rules, and I am trying to do that. There is an equal responsibility on the part of members also to abide by the rules. The hon. member cannot suggest he does not know the rule. I have several times read before this House what constitutes the basis for a question of privilege and I know he is capable of relating to that definition. I am sure he would not want to bring before me matters which are not related to privilege. I have to tell the hon. member that for the last 12 minutes that is exactly what he has been doing.

**Mr. Oberle:** Madam Speaker, you know me well enough, having been with me in this House for nine years, to know that I do not abuse the rules. I make it a point not to do that. Surely the narrow definition of a question of privilege is that when a member finds he cannot exercise the mandate for which he has been elected, in one way or another, he has some recourse to the Speaker with an opportunity to air a grievance by way of a question of privilege. I have certainly told you that I have not been able to exercise my mandate, having been denied access to a minister for a considerable period of time. I am now about to tell you how a former minister has breached the conflict of interest guidelines, and I relate that again to the way I have been hampered in the discharge of my duties in this House. I will get to that and I will not use any more time than necessary in making this point to you.

It is my belief that the Hon. Robert Andras, the former president of the Board of Economic Development Ministers and president of the Treasury Board, has, since he decided not to seek re-election in the February, 1980, general election, acted in a manner which violates the conflict of interest guidelines established by the two Prime Ministers—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. Not only is the hon. member not speaking about a question of privilege, he is speaking on a matter of debate regarding whether some individual has followed guidelines, and he is referring to a former minister to whom these guidelines tabled in this House do not apply because he is no longer a minister of the Crown. I would ask the hon. member to use some of his logic in order to defend his question of privilege.

**Mr. Oberle:** Again with respect, Madam Speaker, I beg to differ with you. These guidelines to which I am about to make reference do apply to former ministers. I will quote from the guidelines which were tabled by the present Prime Minister in May, 1980. These are guidelines which relate to post-employment, and they state in part:

Former ministers are requested not to engage in the activities described in category A for a period of two years after leaving a given position, and to delay for one year any participation in activities described in category B.

These are guidelines which were adopted and tabled in the House of Commons and they apply to former ministers.

I want to go to category A which states that a minister must not:

(a) accept appointment to a board of directors of a commercial corporation which, as a matter of course, was in a special relationship with the department or agency for which they were responsible on an ongoing basis during the last two years of their participation in the Ministry;—

It also states that ministers must not:

(b) change sides to act for or on behalf of any person or commercial corporation in connection with any specific proceeding, transaction, case or other matter to which the Government of Canada is a party and in which they had a personal and substantial involvement on behalf of the government during the last two years of their participation in the ministry;—

Without quoting further, I would like now to tell you what happened in the case of the Hon. Robert Andras. He was the economic development superminister and the president of the Treasury Board before he left. As you know, Mr. Andras