

MR. FRIESEN—USE OF UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE BY MR. KNOWLES

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta): Madam Speaker, I rise on a matter of personal privilege arising from the remarks of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) who is speaking to his soul mate from—I said “soul mate” not “cell mate”.

An hon. Member: You are a disgusting bunch.

Mr. Friesen: Madam Speaker, I intend to refer this matter to the management and members' services committee, but when I rose earlier I was simply reading the regulation that constituency offices may not be located in a political party headquarters. I then proceeded to read—

Madam Speaker: Order. Those rules are not the rules of the House.

Mr. Friesen: I understand that, Madam Speaker.

An hon. Member: Then sit down.

Madam Speaker: What I do not understand is why the hon. member persists in bringing this question before the House when the whole matter is governed by rules established by members themselves and policed by the committee in question.

Mr. Friesen: It was raised, Madam Speaker, and there is no way that should have aroused the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre in the way it did. I would simply refer him to Beauchesne's fifth edition, which he may have had on some occasion an opportunity to read. On page 110 it lists the word “scurrilous” as being considered unparliamentary, a word he used in relation to me and the remarks I made, and I would ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. Knowles: Madam Speaker, if you direct me to withdraw it, I shall do so and substitute the word “disgusting.”

Madam Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) for his co-operation.

MR. MAYER—REPLY OF MR. PEPIN DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Charles Mayer (Portage-Marquette): Madam Speaker, my question of privilege is long-standing and arises partly from an answer I received today during question period from the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin), who was responsible to this House for the Canadian Wheat Board.

I would like to point out to you, Madam Speaker, that the Canadian Wheat Board is not a government department like other departments. It is not funded out of general tax revenues but, rather, largely by western Canadian producers. We have had many, many problems over a long period of time getting answers to some of the matters raised by our constituents regarding the Canadian Wheat Board.

We now have a situation where the minister responsible for that board does not sit in this House and therefore cannot be

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responsive to those problems, because by definition a minister from the other place cannot speak in this House.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. That does not constitute a question of privilege. The custom of having members sitting in the other place responsible for certain government matters is well established. It has happened in governments of all parties, so that in itself does not constitute a question of privilege.

I would ask the hon. member to state clearly and briefly what his question of privilege is, and it has to be related directly to today's deliberations. The hon. member said “partly”; there is no question of “partly”; it has to be related to the deliberations of today.

Mr. Mayer: Madam Speaker, I asked the Minister of Transport what he was doing to see that there was additional tonnage available for shipping during the current shipping season and, to paraphrase his answer, he said he would have discussions with the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board. If this is not a question of privilege, Madam Speaker, I appeal to you to give me some direction as to how I can better serve my constituents with regard to the Canadian Wheat Board.

I have documentation in the form of letters to the clerk of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and also the clerk of the Standing Committee on Transport. I have had discussions with and written a letter to the government House leader, asking him to see if he could get the board in front of the appropriate committee so that all members could ask the officials of the Canadian Wheat Board the appropriate questions.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The fact that an hon. member is not satisfied with an answer that he received in the House does not constitute the basis for a question of privilege; that has to be quite clear to hon. members. I cannot allow the hon. member to continue on that particular question of privilege on that basis. I have listened to him for five minutes and I still do not know what the question of privilege is.

Mr. Mayer: With all due respect, it has been a very short five minutes. If it is not a question of privilege, then maybe the Chair can give me some direction. The board is a very large operation in western Canada. The total budget of the Canadian Wheat Board is approximately equal to the total budgets of the provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, yet Wheat Board officials have not appeared in front of a parliamentary committee so that those of us who have constituents—

• (1650)

Madam Speaker: I am in no way capable of helping the hon. member in this respect. If he wants a particular body to appear before a parliamentary committee, he is perfectly capable of requesting that in the proper place. I have no authority to call witnesses before any committee. I am simply here to apply the rules of the House. The rule that I am applying now is that whatever the hon. member is discussing at this point is not a point of privilege. I cannot hear him any longer if he does not