

Privilege—Mr. Cassidy

anyone observing the proceedings, as to my stand on Bill C-22, the amendments to the Patent Act. Indeed, others were misled and that is quite clear from a headline in *Le Droit* of the next day which read to this effect:

[Translation]

“Patent Act: three Tory Members joined the dissenters.”

● (1510)

[English]

It is pretty clear that my name is being used in vain. I want to assure the House that I stand fully behind Bill C-22. I am perturbed that the Hon. Member, who I believe should know better, misrepresented my simple act of filing a petition on behalf of constituents. I believe there is a clear understanding in this House that Members have a duty to present petitions on behalf of their constituents. However, the fact that he presents a petition does not imply that he agrees with the contents in any way.

That is the point I wish to make, Mr. Speaker. I feel that my rights as a Member of Parliament have been abused by this process. I suggest that the Member for Beaches ought to issue a clarification and extend an apology to me and to the Member for Perth (Mr. Brightwell) who was likewise affected.

Mr. A. H. Harry Brightwell (Perth): Mr. Speaker, I want to confirm what the Hon. Member for Swift Current—Maple Creek (Mr. Wilson) has just said. I was included in this misrepresentation. I consider it a responsibility to file petitions for my constituents. I do not accumulate petitions to try to hold up action in the House. I do as I should, and I believe that I, too, deserve an apology and retraction from that Member.

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Beaches (Mr. Young) is not here. He is on a nation-wide tour drumming up opposition to Bill C-22.

Some Hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Murphy: I believe that in the Member's presentation he followed the rules of the House. He mentioned that he had in his possession a letter from a Member of Parliament indicating that he opposed the legislation. He had the right to mention that in the House of Commons, as he did. He also had the right to mention that two Conservative MPs had received petitions and presented them on behalf of their constituents. Those petitions protested the legislation to change the Patent Act. I believe the Member for Beaches acted in accordance with the rules of the House and did not breach the privilege of any Member. If Members are upset that their actions were mentioned in the House of Commons, that may be something for them to worry about, but it is certainly nothing for us to worry about.

Mr. Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, if what the Hon. Member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy) says is correct, we should all be dreadfully concerned about the operation of this place. It is quite clear that during Oral

Questions on Tuesday last a misrepresentation occurred. It is evident that the misrepresentation was heard widely because it was responded to by journalists. Journalists other than from *Le Droit*, which I mentioned, at least had the decency to call and seek clarification.

However, as a result of the misrepresentation by the Member for Beaches, which I trust was accidental, a headline was issued across the country suggesting that my stand was something it is not. I suppose that was an attempt to embarrass the Government. I suggest it was done in a sly and sneaky way to try to create an innuendo that I was somehow opposed to this legislation when, in fact, I am not.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair has listened carefully to the representations of the Hon. Member for Swift Current—Maple Creek (Mr. Wilson). The matter arose some days ago. I think Hon. Members will recall that the Hon. Member for Peace River (Mr. Cooper) rose and pointed out that Hon. Members often present, on behalf of their constituents, petitions of which they may not necessarily approve. The Chair is certainly not going to impute motives to the Hon. Member for Beaches (Mr. Young), but it is clear that what the Hon. Member for Beaches said on that day caused a misunderstanding and that that misunderstanding has been picked up by the media to the embarrassment of Hon. Members. The Hon. Member for Perth (Mr. Brightwell) has also made his position clear. I listened with care to the intervention of the Hon. Member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy) whose interventions are, of course, always helpful.

I believe the proper ruling in this case is to point out that there is a difference between a question of privilege and a grievance. Hon. Members here have heard a grievance. Hon. Members have indicated that they hope the cause of that grievance was not intentional, and that, of course, would be the hope of the Chair as well. This perhaps gives an indication of how careful all Members ought to be in saying anything which could leave a suggestion that an Hon. Member's position is different than what it is in fact.

Therefore, the Chair must rule that this is not a question of privilege. It is a grievance. I thank all Members for their interventions. I hope Hon. Members will be careful not to create a situation which will necessitate the Chair hearing such representations as these in the near future.

ALLEGED WITHHOLDING OF INFORMATION—SALE OF BANK OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a question of privilege concerning my rights as a Member of Parliament which arises out of discussions we had in this House last Wednesday and Thursday about the Government's Bill relative to the takeover of the Bank of British Columbia by the Hongkong Bank. This is the earliest opportunity I have had to raise this question. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) is here. I am sorry that the Minister of State for Finance (Mr. Hockin), who was involved in the passage of the Bill, is not, but I am sure my comments will be relayed to him.