

● (1550)

Madam Speaker: I should like to ask the hon. member a question. Is it in any way indicated on the door of that office or printed somewhere else that the hon. member is from the House of Commons? If people believe he is a member of the House of Commons, that is nothing upon which I can act. But does that hon. member indicate anywhere that he is a member of the House of Commons?

Mr. Hawkes: Madam Speaker, I have no first hand knowledge of any such sign. On a number of occasions the people who work in my office and myself have been directly informed by a number of individuals that it was the understanding with which they went to the minister's office, and that it took them quite some time to discover that in fact they had talked with someone who was not able to bring their case before Parliament. It might be worthwhile to have that barrier of confusion examined by the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, as the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) suggested.

Mr. Gordon Towers (Red Deer): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. In answer to your question to the hon. member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes), yes, there is confusion in western Canada. When they see a picture of the Hon. Bud Olson spread out and "Alberta's Man" in black letters right across the top of it, they believe that he is their representative in Ottawa.

Madam Speaker: That was not the object of my remarks, and the hon. member knows it.

Is the hon. member for Peterborough (Mr. Domm) seeking the floor on this question of privilege?

Mr. Bill Domm (Peterborough): Madam Speaker, I rise on the question of privilege raised by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). The thing which is most disturbing is trying to determine in my mind what is an infringement of my rights as a Member of Parliament in performing my duty in the House and representing my constituents. I will make this intervention a very brief but very sincere one. I have risen on this same question of privilege in other areas where my rights have been infringed respecting my duties to my constituents in my riding.

Let me tell hon. members opposite that this whole matter is like poison ivy; it is spreading all across the country. What is happening in my riding directly ties in with this question of privilege. In my riding of Peterborough, there is a steady stream of correspondence and telephone calls to the acting minister responsible for my riding.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Domm: Hon. members opposite can clap and applaud, but it could be their job some day. There is an erosion of our responsibilities as Members of Parliament by this kind of action.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Privilege—Mr. Nielsen

Mr. Domm: Let me give some examples to which, perhaps, members opposite may care to listen. What happens when people come to ministers responsible for ridings which they were not elected to represent is not always good. It is bad, because these ministers who are supposed to be responsible for the riding of Peterborough lose more than they win. What has the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Cosgrove) ever done for Peterborough? He lost Parks Canada, he lost Eldorado Nuclear, he lost the de Havilland Dash—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member is debating this question.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Speaker: He has not yet brought forward one argument which is pertinent to the question of privilege. If he does not do so very soon, I will have to say that I have heard enough from him.

Mr. Domm: Thank you for your patience, Madam Speaker. As the matter pertains to my ability to serve my constituents, I do not feel members opposite have to run into my riding like a gestapo group and nail up a sign on my office door which says: "Do not visit the Member of Parliament for Peterborough; go down the street and visit the minister responsible." The point is: Where do we draw the line?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Domm: Members opposite are applauding. They would like to go into those ridings, so that they can win more things for them and gain those seats. In reality—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Jelinek: They are proving their point.

Mr. Domm: They are just proving their point. Madam Speaker must be aware of the fact by now that these members are actually gloating in glory of the fact that they can walk into these ridings, gain prominence and importance, and win security in future elections. Well, they will never win any security in future elections if they lose everything when they intervene. We had more going for us when we were in government than they have ever brought to Peterborough since they started this practice.

If Madam Speaker does not see anything in this question of privilege which is eroding my responsibility to my constituents, then I suggest your Honour should review why my constituents are now writing to and telephoning directly cabinet ministers from other ridings who are responsible—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Domm: Listen, this is what is happening; it could happen in your riding. You will not always sit in government over there. You will be in the opposition some day, and you will stand up and say, "We do not want this government setting up offices in our ridings."