

office which was breached by my not clearing questions I ask in the House. This clearly shows contempt for me as a Member and for Parliament in general as the governing body of this land.

How far does the threat made in this phone call go? Does it mean that the new postal facility promised in the City of Grande Prairie will be cancelled? Does it mean that complaints of my constituents regarding Canada Post service will be ignored?

This kind of threat is serious and likely constitutes a violation referred to in *Beauchesne's Fifth Edition*, page 23, Citation 72, which reads:

Since 1867, the House has had a rule specifically forbidding the offer of money, or any other advantage, to a Member.

Citing from the Twentieth Edition of *Erskine May*, page 156, under the heading "Attempts by Improper Means to Influence Members in their Parliamentary Conduct", appears the following under "Bribery":

On 2 May 1695 the Commons resolved, 'That the offer of money, or other advantage, to any member of Parliament for the promoting of any matter whatsoever, depending or to be transacted in Parliament is a high crime and misdemeanour—

I was very definitely offered an advantage if I behaved in a manner acceptable to Canada Post and, conversely, threatened with a disadvantage if my office failed to co-operate. I consider this matter so serious that I have written a letter to the Minister responsible for Canada Post and to the President of Canada Post requesting an apology and an assurance that this kind of behaviour will not be continued in the future.

I believe that this is a breach of my privileges and if Your Honour finds there exists in any way a hint that my privileges have been violated, I am prepared to move the appropriate motion to have this matter referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to the Hon. Member who complained he had received threats from a person at the Canada Post Corporation who has not been identified in the House. I may point out to the Hon. Member that I was not aware of this telephone call, which was certainly not done at my request, and I must say I am somewhat skeptical and surprised at the serious and elaborate approach the Hon. Member seems to be taking to this situation. I do not think employees working for the President of the Canada Post Corporation would dream of threatening a Member of the House. Since I received a letter from the Hon. Member asking me to forward his story to the President of the Canada Post Corporation and to obtain an apology, I shall, of course, act on the Hon. Member's letter, but I am very surprised that he raised the issue in the House, that he made it a question of privilege and that he is claiming that his privileges as a Member were breached. The fact is that he has asked questions, that he can continue to ask questions, and that in addition to asking oral questions, he can also have

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all the written questions he wants entered on the Order Paper. The simple fact that he is expressing his indignation in the House proves that he is entirely free to act, and that whatever the content of the telephone conversation with an employee of the Canada Post Corporation, it has not restricted him in his actions or prevented him from intervening in the House as he sees fit.

In any event, though not wishing to doubt what the Hon. Member said, I would like to make enquiries to the person he did not name and who may have called from the Canada Post Corporation, since I am sure there is a perfectly good explanation. I will be the first to be surprised if an employee of the Canada Post Corporation had wished to intimidate the Hon. Member in any way.

[English]

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, the Minister should not be surprised nor indeed should he be skeptical of a question of privilege, imbedding as it does a very grave question with respect to the right of Members of Parliament to be free to conduct themselves without having to look over their shoulders at Crown corporations, government employees who are supposed to be controllable by the government, or indeed looking over their shoulders at computers. The Hon. Member who has raised the question deserves every consideration by the Chair with respect to the gravity of what he has raised because if that kind of conduct is going on the conclusions that are reached are frightening.

The Minister says that he has received a letter from the Member. I have not seen the letter but I will consult with him. I think he exercised a discretion, quite properly so when he raises the matter in this Chamber today, in not disclosing any names. He may have done that in the correspondence, I do not know, but I certainly will check with him. I think the Minister should have the name of the individual if the Hon. Member has it so that he can conduct proper inquiries.

This leads me to the suggestion that the Chair may wish to exercise caution in the manner in which the point raised by the Member for Peace River (Mr. Cooper) is treated and to take it under advisement so as to enable the Minister ample opportunity to investigate the complaint that has been lodged by the Member for Peace River. I would assume that the Minister would come back to the House and respond to all Members, not just the Member for Peace River who raised the question, when his inquiries have been completed so that we can rest easy that this kind of conduct is not occurring, which I hope would be the case.

If, as a result of his investigations, there is any substance at all to the question raised by the Member for Peace River—and like most of us in the House, I know him too well to know that he would not be raising a frivolous question of this nature; and he says that today is the first time he has raised a question of privilege, which is indeed a grave one—I would suggest to the Chair that the Chair take it under advisement until the Minister's inquiries have been completed and he has come to the House and responded to the Hon. Member. At that time it