

I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, if you would reconsider a decision given by you on Monday last during the debate in connection with the Portage la Prairie post office site?

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I think my hon. friend is scarcely in order in bringing up a decision made by yourself, some sessions after that decision was made, and I would ask your ruling on that point.

Mr. EDGAR. The hon. gentleman has risen to a question of privilege, and I do not think the Speaker has yet heard what the question is.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. Yes, the hon. gentleman has just stated it.

Mr. CASEY. The point of order just taken cannot be considered, as the hon. gentleman who has risen to a question of privilege has not yet been able to state the question, and he has a perfect right to do so without being interrupted.

Mr. SPEAKER. The hon. gentleman may state the question that he desires to bring up.

Mr. MARTIN. What I desired, Mr. Speaker, was to ask you to reconsider the decision given by you in calling me to order for certain expressions I used in the debate on the Portage la Prairie post office site, which occurred on Monday last. I would ask you to reconsider whether the words I used then were not strictly parliamentary.

Mr. SPEAKER. I may state to the House that I have no doubt at all as to the propriety of my ruling on that occasion. I will draw the attention of the House to the 8th Rule, which says:

The Speaker shall preserve order and decorum, and shall decide questions of order, subject to an appeal to the House.

And Rule 12 says:

A member called to order shall sit down, but may afterwards explain. The House, if appealed to, shall decide on the case, but without debate. If there be no appeal, the decision of the Chair shall be final.

My own view is that the appeal must be made when the decision is rendered.

Mr. MARTIN. I do not wish to make any appeal to the House, Mr. Speaker. All I wish to do is to ask you yourself to reconsider the matter—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order, order.

Mr. MARTIN—and to give certain reasons to endeavour to show you, as I was not in a position to do at that moment, that my expressions were parliamentary. You will remember, Mr. Speaker, that I bowed to your decision at the time—

Mr. SPEAKER. I gave my decision in regard to that matter, and I have no doubt as to its correctness. If my conduct is to

be impugned, of course that may be done in the ordinary parliamentary way; and upon this point I may say this: The House has invested the Speaker with very extensive powers. If, in the exercise of those powers, his conduct is to be called in question in an irregular manner, it seems to me the authority of the Chair would be very greatly jeopardized, and those who wish to maintain the authority of the Chair will agree with me that that is not desirable. So much with regard to the result which might follow if these irregular attacks were permitted to be made upon the Chair. With regard to the question of order, I have to say that it is my duty to see that the rights of every member of this House are respected; but, as a member of the House, I have my own rights, which I think the House will agree with me ought to be recognized; and one of those rights is that if my conduct is to be called in question, it should be done by a motion properly put upon the paper, susceptible of being discussed and susceptible of being amended. I am quite willing to submit my conduct to the decision of the House, and to abide by whatever decision the House may arrive at.

Mr. LAURIER. Mr. Speaker, I desire to dissent, to a certain extent, from the views of Your Honour that have just been expressed. There is no desire to find fault with your ruling of two days ago. There is no desire at all, and I would be sorry if the impression were to prevail that my hon. friend's object was at all to impugn the ruling you gave the other day. I humbly bowed, and so did my hon. friend, to your ruling; but while it is the duty of every gentleman, when called to order by the Speaker, to bow to his decision unless there be very strong reasons for not doing so, even if at the time his judgment was not at all in accord with that of the Speaker. I can recall to your experience, Mr. Speaker, that you have yourself, of your own motion, reversed a decision which you had given on a previous day. On reflection you came to a different conclusion, and in reversing your previous decision you did a manly and honest act for which you deserved to be commended. But if instead your attention had been called to the decision, without any object at all of impugning your motive, and if a discussion had ensued, I do not see that the authority of the Chair would have been impaired in any way or that anything derogatory to the dignity of the House would have taken place. In the matter before us, my hon. friend from Winnipeg conceived that the ruling of the Chair might be questioned and proposed to give reasons for his opinion. I deprecate the idea that in so doing he is wanting at all in respect to the Chair. On the contrary, I am sure I voice his own feeling when I say that he has the highest respect for your authority, Mr. Speaker, but that respect is