

that his earphone has been repaired. After looking into the matter, we found that the earphone's wires had been cut. That means that we have a serious security problem here in the House of Commons, because I cannot imagine who could possibly get into the House and cut the wires of a member's earphone.

In any case, the matter is being investigated, and as far as the hon. member is concerned, I believe that since then his earphone has been repaired. If the hon. member wishes to criticize the manner in which I conduct the proceedings in this House, he knows there is a formal way of doing this. The other day, I was not prejudging the question he wished to address. I was simply making use of my right to recognize this one or that hon. member, and when twenty or more hon. members are trying to get the floor, it is really one of the few powers the Chair has. I gave preference to another hon. member over the hon. member for Longueuil (Mr. Olivier) at various times. Eventually, it was his turn. I really do not see any reason for the hon. member to complain, and I do not see that this is a matter for a question of privilege. Therefore, I do not think the hon. member can take the floor again to discuss his question of privilege.

Mr. Olivier: Once again, you are prejudging what I am going to say.

Madam Speaker: The hon. member for Longueuil has the floor.

Mr. Olivier: Madam Speaker, once again you are prejudging my conclusions. I suggest you wait until I finish.

Madam Speaker: Order, please! Will the hon. member please sit down? The hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) has the floor.

[English]

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, it comes as a shocking surprise to me that we learn for the first time that the electronic *Hansard* system in the House of Commons has been tampered with. No doubt you have asked for an inspection of all members' systems, so that their microphones and speakers may be examined. I would be interested in learning whether any other member's microphone or speaker has been tampered with and whether there is an ongoing investigation into the whole of the circumstances surrounding what appears to have been a deliberate tampering with the electronic system in this chamber.

Madam Speaker: I would remind the hon. member that there is an ongoing inquiry into what has taken place because I, just as the hon. member, was quite shocked at the idea that someone could have tampered in this way with one member's microphone.

Mr. Nielsen: No doubt, Madam Speaker, when your inquiries are completed all members would be interested in hearing the results.

Privilege—Mr. Olivier

While that investigation is going on, I recall that particular evening in question when the sound in the whole of this place was turned off. I noticed the gesture of despair which was made by the operator of the system. The only station that was being heard was the Chair. The sound and the lights were totally dead at all other positions. Perhaps that also is the subject matter of the inquiry you are conducting.

Madam Speaker: I believe if that happened it was because the Speaker was standing in her place. As the hon. member knows, the rule that we established when we introduced electronic *Hansard* was that there would be an electronic interpretation of the Standing Orders. This is quite a brilliant idea since, when the Speaker rises, members should resume their seats and only the Speaker should be allowed to speak. The microphones at members' desks go off automatically. Those are instructions that we have all agreed would be given to the people at the console. If the hon. member is referring to a situation such as the one I have described, he would know that that is quite normal.

Mr. Nielsen: Madam Speaker, I know it is quite normal in those circumstances but I recall very clearly that you had recognized the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton (Mr. Baker). You were seated and the operator was obviously frustrated because he could not activate the microphone in front of the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton and he was shrugging in despair. I wonder if that might be checked out with the electronic *Hansard* personnel, just to double check on those circumstances.

Madam Speaker: That as well.

[Translation]

Mr. Olivier: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also want to say that you were right when I pointed out that the simultaneous translation system was out of order. I simply wish to refer you to a ruling made by one of your predecessors, in 1968, I believe, about a defective translation system or the absence of translators. I would ask you to refer to this ruling, Madam Speaker, in the course of your investigation, and I would like this investigation to determine how it could happen that a member should be deprived of the simultaneous translation facilities when another member is speaking in the other official language which he cannot understand. It is in fact for this reason, Madam Speaker, that I rose eight times in an attempt to draw your attention to the problem. I did not want to interrupt the hon. member, who was entitled to speak, as you had recognized him. He therefore had a right to say what he had to say. However, what I want to say, Madam Speaker, is that I also had a right to understand what the hon. member opposite was saying, and it is for that reason that I tried eight times to call your attention to the problem and show you that I could not understand what the hon. member was saying. I would like to refer you, Madam Speaker, to a ruling made by one of your predecessors who stated very clearly that, in the various committees, when there are no interpreters or when no