

Privilege—Mr. Sargeant

Of 370 students, 80 per cent are of native origin. Unemployment among parents is 55 per cent.

The article goes on to say that at the William Whyte School, of 383 students more than half are from families with single parents and with an unemployment rate of 55 per cent.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I am afraid that the hon. member is not applying his remarks to the point of the question of privilege. I have seen no indication of a question of privilege yet. If the hon. member wishes to be helpful to the Chair, he should focus on his arguments to prove the privilege.

Mr. Orlikow: Madam Speaker, I was just coming to that, but allow me to put on the record one more quotation from the article. The principal of the William Whyte School is quoted as saying:

We are talking about a Third World right within our own city.

That comment is apropos of the questions raised earlier today.

My question of privilege arises because we co-operated with the minister, despite the very low allocations for our areas. We appointed our advisory committees to work on the applications, and they followed the guidelines laid down by the minister and his department. The applications were examined and screened, and the best ones were sent forward to the minister. Here we are in December with a very high rate of unemployment in the core area of Winnipeg, and the minister has not seen fit to look at and approve the applications which have been recommended so that these people who are unemployed can get on with the job. We are talking about people who are living in real poverty and slum conditions. It is a disgrace that the minister has not—and I would say it is for political reasons—seen fit to move these applications forward.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, I would like to address myself to the purported question of privilege brought forward by the combined forces of the Manitoba New Democratic Party. In saying that I underline the fact that it has less to do with privilege and more to do with politics, obviously in the Conservative tact. I spent 12 hours in this House yesterday on estimates, at which time hon. members had every opportunity to raise any question, make any comment, or bring anything to my attention. Neither of the hon. gentlemen who raised the question of privilege had the courtesy or the respect to raise this issue during that period of time. It suggests to me that they are simply using this particular opportunity to make a political point.

In so far as the question is concerned, the hon. member for Selkirk-Interlake (Mr. Sargeant) is dead wrong. The projects for Manitoba constituencies were approved well over a week ago and sent to the regional office for distribution. There was no hold-up in my office. I approved something like 900 projects in the past week which were recommended by all parties, and I intend to approve the rest of the projects this week.

The projects for any one constituency were not held up. As far as I know, the projects for Manitoba were approved, but I do not know why there was a hold-up. I will check into it, but it must be somewhere between my office and the regional office.

It would have been far more in keeping with the procedures, rules and conventions of this House if the hon. member, rather than protesting so much, had had the common decency to call my office, and he would have received that information. It is not a question of privilege, but a question of sheer street-barrel politics.

Mr. Sargeant: Madam Speaker—

Madam Speaker: I will cut the debate. The hon. member for Selkirk-Interlake (Mr. Sargeant) knows he cannot speak twice on the same question of privilege. I will not entertain any other hon. members on the question of privilege because, as it was posed, I did not find a prima facie case of privilege. The hon. member might perhaps have a legitimate grievance, but he certainly does not have a question of privilege. The matter is a perfect subject for debate, and the hon. member should perhaps take advantage of the proper time to introduce that debate, but that is up to him.

In his intervention the hon. member said that the minister had not played by the rules. The rules to which he referred were not the rules of the House of Commons. The hon. member also said that the minister established the rules and that everybody is required to follow those rules except the minister. I reiterate that these are not the rules of the House of Commons and, therefore, the entire matter is completely outside my jurisdiction. So, if as the hon. member has suggested, the matter needs to be straightened out, I would suggest that the two hon. members straighten it out between themselves. Certainly it is not a matter in which the Chair can usefully intervene.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE '80s

Third report of the Special Committee on Employment Opportunities for the '80s—Mr. Allmand.

• (1520)

[Translation]

FINANCE, TRADE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Sixth Report of Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs—Mr. Peterson.

[Editor's Note: For text of above report, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]