

whatever they can and that no one has the power to change what is on the record.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, if I were to put it in its basest terms, if for example the member for Halton—Peel had the floor and in the course of his debate I shouted: “The hon. member is a liar.” I would never do that, but let us say I did. Mr. Speaker, the member cannot ask me to stand up and take it back because, in fact, it is not a part of the record. It is not recorded. I cannot take back what is not part of the record.

I am very concerned, Mr. Speaker, about actions of chairmen of committees. In this particular instance and in a previous instance with the chairman of the finance committee it seems to me that the chairmen of standing committees are going beyond what are even the powers of the Speakers of this House.

I cannot imagine that you, Mr. Speaker, would instruct the recording officers of this Chamber not to record those comments that come from members of this House when others have the floor.

Apart from the fact that *Hansard* will be so sanitized, it will be unexciting. Imagine *Hansard* bereft of “fuddle-duddle”, or any of the more colourful asides that are included as part of the debates of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the attempt by the member for Halton—Peel to direct the committees’ reporters to censor the members of the committees constitutes a serious *prima facie* breach of privilege and I believe it should be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Mr. Garth Turner (Halton—Peel): Mr. Speaker, I have heard my friend’s words. I understand his arguments, and I must rise to say that I think it is important that you, Sir, understand how this particular situation arose.

The member for Nickel Belt, a member of the Standing Committee on Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Government Operations is prone to some outbursts in committee. From time to time the hon. member will make comments while another member has the floor.

The hon. member will sometimes question a witness during the time allotted to another member of the committee. Sometimes, in error, the console operator has opened the microphone of a member of the committee who does not have the floor and has not been recognized. Console operators, in general, do not do this

Privilege

but, from time to time, it does occur. We believe, in the committee, that the member who has the floor should be accorded the courtesy of retaining the floor and being the sole speaker.

• (1510)

It is similar to you maintaining order in this House. You have to do it through a certain set of rules. You recognize a member to have the floor and, while that member has the floor, you do not allow other members to have the floor at the same time. This is the same rule we apply in committee. As in the House, we do that by means of electronic control, that is, recording the member who has the floor and not opening the microphones for members who do not have the floor.

That is simply what this letter sought to clarify. The hon. member says that his privileges, as a member, have been infringed upon. I submit that he does not have the privilege of disrupting committee meetings, he does not have the privilege to question witnesses when he does not have the floor. He does not have the privilege to demand that his words be put on the record, when he has not been recognized. All members are recognized in turn and in order and he does not have that privilege. Therefore, I maintain, that because that privilege is not his, it has not been abrogated.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few brief comments concerning the letter. I received a copy of it late this morning. The words that I find to be of particular interest to the Chair are the following: “It is to be considered as speaking off the record and the words are not to be recorded in the evidence”.

As to whether or not someone’s microphone should be turned on or off, I do have some sympathy perhaps with the proposition that those who are not recognized do not usually have a microphone available to them in order to get the electronic registering. That is, of course, a precedent established in this House.

However, I do not believe that Mr. Speaker has ever ruled that something that was said and duly recorded by the interjectionists or those other people who are charged here on the floor of the House to register those interjections, has ever not been recorded in the evidence, if it were deemed to be a part of what was stated in the House. From time to time, members will interject across the floor, and the interjection is not germane to