

Privilege—Mr. Boudria

Mr. Boudria: You use the word “progressive” in your name.

Mr. Lewis: They also join in this argument that the Member’s privileges have been breached.

Is the Hon. Member saying that he never uses television or radio in order to espouse his causes? We have no difficulty with the Parliamentary News Service, just as we would have no difficulty if the New Democratic Party or the Liberal Party ever had the expertise, the gumption, or even the story to tell in order to raise their own parliamentary news service.

• (1530)

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, I just want to participate in this because I have never heard such unadulterated horse feathers in all my life. First, the Parliamentary Secretary rose and accused us of using “New” Democratic Party—

An Hon. Member: The Minister.

Mr. Rodriguez: Pardon me, the Minister. I would not want to violate his privilege. In the same fashion, how can those Members opposite call themselves “Progressive” Conservatives? It is a contradiction in terms.

Let us make a distinction between that and what the Minister says when he tells us we have *Beauchesne’s Parliamentary Rules and Forms*. One could hardly accuse Beauchesne of propagating Tory propaganda. I understand the problem with which that Party is faced. It has bungled miserably, and members of the press, who observe impartially in this House, are reporting exactly what they see and hear.

The Conservative Party wants to circumvent this truth that emanates from Parliament Hill, reported by an impartial press. What it wants to do, of course, is to put out its own propaganda, its own “parliamentary” news. That is a clear violation because it is not parliamentary in the sense that people in Canada understand the term “parliamentary”. It is simply Conservative propaganda, telling one side of the issue, not accessible to members of either opposition Party in this House or to the independent Member. At the very least, it is false advertising to call it the parliamentary news. It is simply Tory propaganda to circumvent what has been reported about the bungling of the Government on issue after issue.

I think the Hon. Member raised a very good point in terms of privilege with respect to the use of the word “parliamentary”. I hardly think that when Beauchesne writes in impartial terms about parliamentary rules, the conduct and behaviour of Members of the House and what constitutes privilege, one can actually say he is abusing the privilege of any Member of this House. In fact, it is an erudite study of the way in which the rules of any Parliament should be conducted.

What the Tories are doing has nothing to do with Erskine May, Beauchesne, or with any of the educated parliamentary tomes written by people who are knowledgeable. What the Tories are simply doing is misleading the Canadian public by

putting out their garbage called “Parliamentary News Service” which it is not, but it is certainly a violation of the privileges of Hon. Members, I would argue.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): As you know, Mr. Speaker, I very seldom rise to participate in procedural debate, but I would like very briefly to make procedural points, strictly unpolitical points.

The Minister of State referred his arguments to the *Parliamentary Guide*, Beauchesne and so on. I make the very simple argument with respect to the *Parliamentary Guide* that the word “Parliamentary” refers equally to all of us. It mentions all Members of Parliament, be they in the House of Commons or the Senate. We are all treated equally, which is the point the Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell (Mr. Boudria) was trying to make. However, we do not all have equal access to the new parliamentary service. I think the use of the word “parliamentary” is what really bothers us.

Second, *Beauchesne’s Parliamentary Rules and Forms* refers to all of us with respect to how we conduct ourselves in this place. Therefore, I do not think a very strong argument has been made by the Minister of State. The parliamentary dictionary refers to all of us, to parliamentary terms and references and so on. It does not refer to one particular political Party, be it my Party or the other two Parties. It is the same with the *Canadian Parliamentary Handbook*, and Erskine May as well.

I make the argument that what the Minister is referring to is the use of the word “parliamentary” in books and references which refer to all of us equally. The central argument in terms of procedure is whether or not the use of the word “parliamentary” is proper in terms of how it infringes upon our privileges to represent our people.

I say to you very clearly, Mr. Speaker, that the word “parliamentary” will lead people to a certain perception that this service is available to all of us because it is a parliamentary news service. That service is not available to me. It is available to the Hon. Member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake (Mr. Gormley) but not available to me as the Member for Yorkton—Melville. I would suggest that you take a very serious look at this issue, Mr. Speaker, because I think in a way it misleads the people of Canada.

The last point I want to make is that in some ways it is almost like a copyright or patent. The word “parliamentary”—I do not want to use the word “sacred”—is a very important word to describe the activities of all of us who are elected here as equals. When one political Party, be it my Party or any other, starts to use that word in terms of getting out its own message, I think it infringes upon the rights of all of us, regardless of which Party we come from, in a similar way that a copyright or patent might do. It is the word “parliamentary” in the name that really concerns me.

I would not object to this news service in the procedural sense if it were called the “The Government Members’ News