

Privilege—Mr. W. Baker

whether that was the part he was referring to, or whether it was the portion of the speech referring to the RCMP.

To my way of thinking, Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that both Beauchesne and your own ruling on Monday show that to refer to people in this House as lying or as liars is unparliamentary. I can quote more examples. On page 907 the hon. member from Calgary North accuses us of blackmail and says the security services have been blackmailed by this government. That is clearly an allegation of criminal wrongdoing and is contrary to the rules laid down in Beauchesne.

Mr. Chrétien: Terrible!

Mr. Basford: Again, on page 907, the hon. member said of me:

I said that when they threw pumpkin pie I hoped the seeds of the pumpkin would be as hard as rocks—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Basford: I am not complaining about that, but it seems to me that for the hon. member for Calgary North to associate himself and align himself with crackpots in our society who throw pies is just a little disappointing. I will not, however, ask him to withdraw that. The hon. member then went on to say:

—when the minister made this, in my view, untruthful attack on the opposition—

Obviously, that is an allegation of lying which is clearly unparliamentary.

Mr. Chrétien: Withdraw.

Mr. Basford: I am sure the hon. member was speaking with his usual verve and enthusiasm and did not really mean to use such unparliamentary language. Mr. Speaker, in line with your ruling of Monday in which you endeavoured to set out how we in this House should behave with dignity and decorum—an effort which we on this side endeavour to make—I would ask that the hon. member for Calgary North and the hon. member for Vancouver South withdraw those remarks which I have cited and withdraw them in a large and liberal way, as required by citation 141.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I am rather amused, to say the least. I would, however, just point out that when the Minister of Justice was in the House he delivered quite an attack on the opposition. I find it rather interesting that he would take objection to what I said later. I feel I was making what amounts to fair political comment. Nothing in my remarks makes me feel otherwise. Last night when I spoke—and a fellow needs to have fairly good lungs sometimes—the hon. member for Restigouche spoke louder than I did all the time I was speaking. I would hope that now the minister has raised what he thinks is, maybe, a joke, when he means to be serious, I have to answer him seriously. These are the minister's words as reported at page 894:

[Mr. Basford.]

That has been said by the Prime Minister and other ministers in the House and for the minister to suggest in his speech today to the contrary simply reinforces by thesis that today's debate and this resolution are nothing more than a crass, transparent device to manipulate public opinion.

Mr. Chrétien: That is not illegal, though. That is not against the rules.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): It is the same sort of thing.

Mr. Woolliams: If the hon. gentleman would be silent for a few moments, I would read from Beauchesne, citation 132. The minister has been in the House and has made his speech. I do not think I would be breaking a confidence if I said I met the hon. gentleman and he said, "I understand you'll be speaking. I hope you don't mind, but I have a dinner engagement." I shall not go into that further. He knew I would be speaking. I had my speech prepared. It was not made off the cuff; it was written out. I delivered it with all the ability at my command. But the proper time for interference is when the offensive expressions are uttered, and not afterward—and I am not saying they were offensive. It may take place either on the Speaker's voluntary motion or a call to order of a member assailed, or some other member or a general call of the House. The speaker feels more strongly his duty to interpose such language as seems unparliamentary with regard to the absent member.

To be fair, Mr. Speaker, there was a large number of Liberal members in the House when I delivered that speech. Any one of them could have risen if it was thought that the language was unparliamentary. But no one saw fit to do so. I want, now, to deal with what I am really saying. Surely my remarks were fair comment. You pretty well have to read the whole thing. What I was saying was this:

What we are saying is this, that surely there would be no accountability at all if we are to believe the ministers, which I do not accept. They have never had any accountability. It is not a day to day job. They have not done it from week to week or month to month or year to year for eight years. There has been an absence of any accountability or any responsibility.

● (1552)

In the absence of accounting, I say that the minister or ministers were negligent. You are a lawyer, sir, and will appreciate that when dealing with the word "negligence" in the vehicles act it has a different meaning. I can quote a case in which the Supreme Court of Canada defined negligence in that sense as something greater than ordinary negligence, as having some culpable or blameworthy weight. I do not refer to culpability in the criminal sense of a voluntary statement; I am talking about the minister being called negligent in not giving some accounting for the security of the nation. I am not going to say anything more about that.

When I talk about covering up, Mr. Speaker, I do not think anyone could sit in the House for 19 years, as I have, and not say that there has not been some covering up, to use layman's language, on both sides of this House from time to time. I am sure that when we formed the government, our ministers—I do not mean this in the criminal sense—may not always have told