

you at this time, and then possibly sent to a committee, but that it be sent to a committee directly.

I think that before any member of this House chooses that route, they should consider what we are dealing with at the present time. We have a number of charges that were half made by the chief government Whip since October 12, both in this House on more than one occasion, but also in front of the committee. I understand charges were made at times when the member for Kamloops, the House leader of the New Democratic, was not here.

The problem is if we send this matter to the committee, this committee has a Conservative majority. The Conservative majority is appointed by the government Whip. Substitution in many ways is the responsibility of that same Whip. Permanent membership on that committee is the responsibility of that Whip.

Other privileges of the Conservative members on that committee, whether it is trips abroad or other assignments, is the responsibility of that Whip. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, without making any reference to the motivation of the chief government Whip, that this particular committee would not be perceived in any way, shape or form as an impartial panel that would listen to both members and be perceived by the public, or anybody else, as a body that could truly, impartially judge the facts, the motivations and the activities of the two members.

On that point, I do not believe that this is an option by which any member in this House can abide. I believe that it is possible for the two members to resolve some of their differences outside this Chamber and I think that that might be the approach that should be followed.

I think all of us have learned a lesson on what has happened since October 12 on this issue. I think this is an important lesson because the whole purpose of the Special Committee on the Parliament of Canada Act was to make sure that members did not find their names out in public, allegations made without them having a chance to defend themselves or without people understanding what the rules and regulations of the House of Commons are.

### *Privilege*

• (1610)

What I find interesting is that we seem to be going through that same exercise within the House as a result of our procedures and because the member for Kamloops had business elsewhere. We had on a continuous basis from October 12 until last Thursday the chief government Whip getting up in this House or in committee and starting on his process of making charges and always ending by saying, "But I won't raise those issues here. I will deal with them when the member gets back".

However, the damage was done. The charges were, if not made, at least alluded to. There was some damage done to the reputation of the member for Kamloops. That member has never had an opportunity in the House or in the committee to respond. That is the problem. To say, "Let us have peace now, the member for Kamloops should keep quiet, should not go to the press and we will resolve this outside the Chamber or inside the Speaker's office or by getting together over a beer" does not resolve the problem in many ways. The allegations were made.

It is like charging someone, a member of this House, with misspending his budget, or saying he has hired his own relations or friends of his family for jobs that should not be done. Once the charge is made, the damage is done.

I think that if the chief government Whip considers what he has said in this House about the member for Kamloops, what he has said in the committee about the member for Kamloops, he would recognize that he has engaged in the same sort of exercise that the committee was established in the first place to try to prevent.

I am quite willing to see the two members go out and see if they can resolve the issue quietly, but at the same time I think it is a lesson for all of us that if we are going to get up here and make charges against one of our fellow members, then we should at least expect those people to have the right to reply.

**Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West):** Mr. Speaker, we may be getting somewhere. I accept totally the comment that once the charge is made, the damage is done. Forty-five minutes after the committee meeting on October 10, charges were starting to be made about my behaviour and the behaviour of my colleagues and the damage was done. They were printed on October 11.