

with one, which is a matter not so dissimilar from matters raised by the hon. member for Broadview-Greenwood (Mr. Rae) and the hon. member for the Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). It is a different application of the same principle.

● (2050)

You used the expression "question of an obstacle to a member in the performance of his duties" in response to the hon. member for Yukon the other day. I hope to be able to convince you of an obstacle posed to me and I believe to other Members of Parliament from northern Alberta, an indirect obstacle. I think a discussion of the facts will make it clear why this indirect obstacle was placed in the way of all members from northern Alberta carrying out the duties with which they have been charged.

The facts are important and, with your permission, I will deal with the facts first and then discuss some of the principles I believe are involved. Let me first indicate that only on Friday when I initially provided you with notice did I learn about these facts. I brought them to your attention in a notice which I think you felt was not sufficiently detailed, so you discarded it. That is why I have provided you with another notice today.

The facts which I want to put on the record as I believe them to be were obtained from Mr. Herschel Ezrin who is the acting executive director of the Canadian Unity Information Office. He informed me on Friday that he has hired on a contract basis one Pat O'Hallorhan, whose duties are to include "monitoring media reaction to Canadian government programs" in the Edmonton area. Office space will be found shortly for this young woman by the Department of Public Works. I am not sure whether that space will be in a government building or in the building where I have my constituency office, or somewhere else. I do not know that that point is particularly important.

Let me outline the basis of my privilege. The fact is that if this woman's name were Pat Smith or Pat Leblanc, it would make no difference, but the background particulars in respect of this person are that she is a past president of the federal Liberal party in Alberta and a past president of the Wetaskiwin Liberal Association. I would point out to hon. members that there is such a thing as a federal Liberal party in Alberta.

An hon. Member: All three of them.

Mr. Kilgour: She is a twice defeated Liberal candidate in Wetaskiwin. I think she got her deposits back, but the hon. member for Wetaskiwin (Mr. Schellenberger) can enlighten you in that regard. She certainly will not get it back the next time. I am informed and believe that until she was appointed to this government position on taxpayers' money she was a full-time employee on the payroll of the federal Liberal party of Alberta. The point is that her very quick move from one position to the other without the two-year delay, which applies to the CBC, represents a violation of the conflict of interest rules. She moved from the position of a full-time worker for one of the federal political parties to the position of a contract employee of the federal government, which in my opinion

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constitutes an indirect obstacle to those of us who have been elected in the province of Alberta.

This is somewhat like the twinning concept. I would argue that the twinning concept was adopted in order that the people of Alberta think they would be better off to go to the Liberal twin with their problems. I believe I have been twinned with the hon. member for Trinity (Miss Nicholson). This concept was adopted to create the impression in the minds of the people of Alberta that they would get better results if they went to see the local MP's twin, in my case the hon. member for Trinity, or to the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Towers), the hon. member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes) or the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona. The same principle—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I think the hon. member is now departing from—Would the hon. member resume his seat. I am sorry but I have to insist on that. If I do not insist on decorum, there will not be any. I want to tell the hon. member I feel he is departing from the kind of argument that might be useful. What I would like to know is how the appointment of this individual has indirectly impeded the hon. member. I must warn the hon. member that there has to be a direct impediment in order for his question of privilege to qualify as a *prima facie* question of privilege.

Mr. Kilgour: Madam Speaker, I appreciate that you have not had to go through the ordeal of attending law school, but there is an important principle in respect of the interpretation of rules. I would respectfully point out that John Willis, who has been a professor to many of us, pointed out that one should take a wide and liberal interpretation when interpreting statutes. I would invite you to take a wide and liberal approach in interpreting the rule in relation to "an indirect obstacle". Let me refer you to Erskine May at page 151, and I quote:

Conduct not amounting to a direct attempt to influence a member in the discharge of his duties, but having a tendency to impair his independence in the future performance of his duty, will also be treated as a breach of privilege.

Obviously this woman is not creating a fence around Members of Parliament from Alberta, but the perception is being created that people are better off to go to Miss O'Hallorhan with their problems than they are to go to the democratically elected Members of Parliament from Alberta. In my respectful submission that is an indirect obstacle placed in the way of Members of Parliament from Alberta in the performance of their functions.

I listened carefully when you used the word "obstacle" in response to the hon. member for Yukon, and it seemed to me, with respect, that you were calling for a very narrow interpretation of the word "obstacle". I would invite the Chair to adopt a wider view of the word "obstacle", perhaps one more in line with this ruling referred to at page 151 of the ninth edition of Erskine May.

You may suggest that no letter has been sent as referred to in the ruling which I believe you have before you. Are we to draw narrow limits around the word "obstacle"? Why in the 1980s can we not take a broader view of that word? Why can we not say there is an obstacle created for the hon. member for