

What else is left to a Member of this House? If in fact Private Members' Notices of Motions is the only alternative, then the governing party can quite clearly block, for partisan purposes if it chooses to do so or for whatever other reason, that motion from ever coming to the House for a vote. Surely that would subvert, not just spirit of the right of Members to bring a serious matter of this nature before the House, but that would subvert the privileges of all Members of this House. Most important, what message would that send out to Canadians?

Consider the circumstances. A Member of this House admits that he has been guilty of very serious criminal wrongdoing that involves funds of this House as well. Unless we as Members of this House are in a position at least to put before the House a motion that allows Members to debate the question and to subject that Member to our judgment, I think Canadians are going to shake their heads and say that this place is not doing justice.

• (1130)

I am not suggesting that the Member for Chambly (Mr. Grisé) should not have the right to appear before the House and to make a statement. Indeed, under Standing Order 20 of the Orders of the House, he does have that option if a motion of this nature is presented. I would invite him to take advantage of that. Standing Order 20 states:

If anything shall come in question touching the conduct, election or right of any Member to hold a seat, that Member may make a statement and shall withdraw during the time the matter is in debate.

That Standing Order is there for a reason. I would hope that Your Honour would recognize that I have demonstrated a prima facie breach of the privileges of the Members of the House; that Your Honour would permit the House to debate the question, and would obviously give notice to the Member for Chambly to enable him to avail himself of his undoubted rights under Standing Order 20 of the Standing Orders of the House.

Should Your Honour find a prima facie case of privilege in these circumstances sufficient to allow a motion to be put forward, following Your Honour's ruling on the prima facie case of privilege, I would move the following motion:

That Richard Grisé, the Member of Parliament for Chambly, having pleaded guilty to two counts of fraud and nine counts of breach of trust,

Privilege—Mr. Robinson

offences involving abuse of parliamentary funds and abuse of parliamentary privileges, be expelled from the House of Commons, that his seat be declared vacant, and that the Speaker do issue a warrant to the Chief Electoral Officer to make out a new writ for the election of a new Member to serve in the present Parliament for the constituency of Chambly.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, we must not forget the constituents of the Hon. Member for Chambly. They have not had an elected representative in this House since the Hon. Member was sworn in on December 5 last year. They are now represented by a Member who has admitted that he was guilty of fraud and breach of trust, who is no longer in his riding, who cannot serve its constituents, who may not receive public monies, and who does not have the right to sit here in this House as the representative of the constituents of Chambly.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Chambly are entitled to an honest representative, and they have the right to elect someone else to represent them.

[English]

I would note that whatever arguments the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lewis) may wish to make concerning a period of appeal, and he is entitled to make that esoteric, legal argument, that does not go to the fundamental question which is before the House—and about which a 30-day or a 60-day appeal period is totally irrelevant—that is, what steps do we as representatives of the people of Canada have the right to take when a Member of this House admits to very serious criminal wrongdoing? That is the issue before the House. That is the issue before the Chair. I hope that Your Honour would allow that very fundamental question to be debated by all Members of the House.

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, today a very serious matter has been raised. It is the question as to how the House should take into account the fact that the Hon. Member for Chambly (Mr. Grisé) has pleaded guilty to a number of very serious charges, charges which relate directly, I would submit, to his work and responsibilities as a Member of Parliament.

[Translation]

It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that the Hon. Member for Chambly (Mr. Grisé) has pleaded guilty to several charges of breach of trust, fraud and influence peddling, and that these charges were connected with his work as a Member of Parliament. Mr. Speaker, I think we must