

Question of Privilege

active consideration is being given to installing a small transistor radio under each seat in the galleries so the simultaneous translation of speeches in the house may be heard? This is a system that does not require the use of wires, and worked with a great deal of effectiveness at the national Liberal women's convention in the Chateau Laurier.

Mr. Speaker: I am sure the hon. member will put that question on the order paper in due course.

INQUIRY AS TO OCCUPANT OF ROOM 645N

On the orders of the day:

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gerard Laprise (Chapleau): Mr. Speaker, may I put a question to the Secretary of State?

Since some members of the Ralliement Creditistes must double up in their offices in the main block of the parliament buildings, could the Secretary of State inform the house by what right a certain individual who is not a member of parliament occupies room No. 645N?

[*Text*]

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Secretary of State): I will look at the question when it appears in *Hansard* to see what I can say by way of reply.

PRIVILEGE

MR. OLSON—ARTICLE IN "GLOBE AND MAIL"
RESPECTING MEMBERS' OFFICES

Mr. H. A. Olson (Medicine Hat): I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. On the front page of the *Globe and Mail* today there is a headline which reads "House Speaker accused of flagrant injustice." The headline goes on: "Refused three connecting offices, Caouette calls it national shame."

I should like you to know, Mr. Speaker, that in keeping with the practice that has been followed in this house of granting more than one office to the leaders of groups I, along with our whip, made a reasonable offer to exchange four rooms with the hon. member for Villeneuve and his group for four other rooms. They chose to reject this offer. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I wish to accept all the responsibility for not moving out of the office adjacent to the office now occupied by the hon. member for Villeneuve, and to absolve you and all of the other officers of this house from what the hon. member for Villeneuve has called a "new national shame", "outrageous injustice" and "ignoble treatment tolerated by the authorities of the federal parliament."

[Mr. Cowan.]

[*Translation*]

Mr. Real Caouette (Villeneuve): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the question of privilege on which the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Olson) has risen, I wish to state that the title of the article published this morning in the *Globe and Mail* is not the same as the title of the statement I gave yesterday to the press.

The hon. member for Medicine Hat asserts that he has offered us some offices; well, I must say that neither he, nor the members of his group are entitled to offer anything of the kind. Actually, it is only the House of Commons authorities who are empowered to allocate offices, and this very question was discussed in your own office, Mr. Speaker, in the presence of the Sergeant-at-Arms. At that time, 14 offices had been allocated to us but now we only have 12 offices for 13 members. Two members of our group are sharing the same room.

We did not ask for any changes, except for the addition of an office, adjacent to my own room, on the sixth floor. That is all we have asked for, and two of our members are ready and willing to stay in the same office.

However, the hon. member for Medicine Hat wishes to bring about considerable changes; he would like to see some of the members, who are actually in the west block, move to the centre block.

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I am still speaking on the question of privilege.

My hon. colleague for Medicine Hat would also want to see the members of our group who are at the moment in the central building, move to the west block. Now, it is not the responsibility of the hon. member for Medicine Hat to settle that matter.

All we want is a sufficient number of offices for all the members of our group, so that we will be on an equal footing with all the other parties in the house.

We merely ask for justice, and we do not want this question of privilege to be misinterpreted. We do not ask for special favours, we merely ask for a just and fair treatment.

[*Text*]

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): I should like to say a word on the same question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. It would be very interesting for the house to ascertain if it was the staff of the House of Commons who were employed to remove the picture of the hon. member for Red Deer from the office of the hon. member for Villeneuve.