

The Prime Minister also indicated there was a lack of representation from the various regions of Canada. The basic problem is a lack of sensitivity on the part of this Liberal government for the various regions of Canada. If the government would show that sensitivity, there would be no need for these regional ministers.

In my opinion, it is very important that this matter be referred to a committee so we can find out what it costs for these various regional offices and so we can investigate the matter of the 20 Members of Parliament, which the hon. member from Vancouver brought to our attention earlier. If the purpose of this procedure is to undercut the role of the elected representatives here in the House of Commons, I say that what the government is doing is spending taxpayers' money to undercut the democratic process which has served us well for a good many years here in Canada.

● (1650)

The Prime Minister, of all individuals, preaches to us about being parliamentarians for all of Canada. If there is one individual in this House of Commons who has undercut the role of parliamentarians, it is the Prime Minister.

Mr. Gordon Towers (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, in rising to support this motion, I wish to bring further information to your attention that will be beneficial to you in making a decision. No doubt part of the confusion came about because the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) said that Members of Parliament are nobodies when they are off Parliament Hill. After the last election, he said he would listen to members of Parliament in the opposition. Up to the present time this has not been happening.

My colleague from Pembina (Mr. Elzinga) stated Senator Bud Olson is the minister responsible for the province of Alberta. We who have been elected in the province of Alberta feel we are responsible to the electorate of that province. I am sure that 95 per cent of the people in the province feel the same way.

In one of the weekly papers not too long ago there was a picture of Senator Bud Olson. Incidentally, it is a Liberal paper. The heading was, "Alberta's mad". In the *Red Deer Advocate*, there is a further bit of information. The article is headed, "Central Alberta oilmen give 'twin' a message for Ottawa". I quote:

Red Deer's Liberal "twin" MP came to listen to the area's concerns this weekend, and this morning he got an earful.

Liberal MP Ralph Ferguson, from the Ontario riding of Lambton-Middlesex, was told federal energy policies are forcing drilling equipment, skilled workers and entrepreneurs to leave the country.

The question is who is representing those people. Is it Senator Bud Olson, the MP for Lambton-Middlesex (Mr. Ferguson) or me? That is the question. The government, through individual members, backbenchers and members of the Treasury benches is subverting the parliamentary system by interfering with the duties and responsibilities of elected Members of Parliament in opposition.

Privilege—Mr. Rae

I am referring to the twinning process apparently advocated by the Prime Minister for ridings not necessarily represented by Liberals. The suggestion of a cabinet minister twin is not acceptable to the people of Alberta. The way this whole matter could be cleared—

Madam Speaker: Order. I must interrupt the hon. member. I have to be fair to the hon. member for Vancouver Centre (Miss Carney). I said I had to distinguish between two questions. We have already discussed the one of twinning in this Parliament. I cannot recall under which terms exactly I made a ruling on it. The hon. member may have other points he wants to raise about twinning, and we can hear that in due course. But today we are discussing a question of privilege on the matter of ministerial responsibilities over regions and constituencies, which was raised by the hon. member for Broadview-Greenwood. The discussion must remain on that point.

Mr. John Bosley (Don Valley West): Madam Speaker, I will be very brief on the matter. It is not twinning. If you look at the list, it may be tripling. Many of these ministers have three, four and five ridings to look after.

I am interested in this for two reasons. I would very much like to see Your Honour take seriously the suggestion that it is a matter of privilege to all of us which should be dealt with in the committee and rule in favour of that position. The reason is very simple. After today, do I tell my constituents to write to me or the Solicitor General (Mr. Kaplan) who, according to that list, is the minister responsible for my riding? I will have to explain to those who think I am here to help them that the government decided one of their people will do that.

If you find this is not a question of privilege, Madam Speaker, I will then be on my feet to ask how we persuade the post office to send our mail to the ministers responsible because we clearly will not have a role to play.

The government is saying that the members for the constituencies are not the ones who will make the representations on behalf of their constituents to the ministers responsible for departments. If we accept their logic, we should make an appeal immediately and directly to the ministers the government decided in its wisdom would be responsible for our ridings.

The particular point for Don Valley West that hits home is this. The Prime Minister's list indicates a minister of the Crown who shall be responsible for the riding of Don Valley West. That minister of the Crown was rejected by the people of Don Valley West in 1972. He ran in the riding and was defeated. The government is suggesting that the people of Don Valley West should now turn to somebody, they directly and deliberately rejected, in order to get what is rightfully theirs from the Government of Canada. Speaking as a member of this House on behalf of my constituents, I find that offensive.

Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River): Madam Speaker, I will be brief as well. My reservation about this document, of which I have now obtained a copy, is that it