

Madam Speaker: That is a fact, I am being advised that there was an error in *Hansard* and it will be corrected. I thank the hon. member for bringing this to our attention.

[English]

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Madam Speaker, just to clarify, I understand you ruled there was no question of privilege because the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton (Mr. Baker) had claimed that because he was in the legal profession he was being placed in a special position, and he was trying to distinguish himself from other Members of Parliament in that context. Surely—

Madam Speaker: Order. This is a commentary on a ruling, not a point of order and I cannot accept it at this time.

The hon. member for York-Peel (Mr. Stevens) on a question of privilege?

Mr. Stevens: Yes.

Madam Speaker: I am sorry, I have many more before the hon. member's.

Mr. Stevens: Madam Speaker, my question of privilege arises from the notice that I was attempting to give you with respect to the comment made by the Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Blais). I know the question of privilege that I gave you notice of is coming up later, but I feel we can clear up this question of privilege very quickly.

Madam Speaker: I would think it is a point of order.

Mr. Stevens: No, it is not.

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PRIVILEGE

MR. STEVENS—USE OF WORD "OBSTRUCTIONIST" BY MR. BLAIS

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel): Madam Speaker, my question of privilege is this. As we know, the Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Blais) made certain random comments about members of the House, and presumably of my party, being obstructionists. He said we were obstructing the progress of the House. You will recall I rose on a point of order and asked him to be specific and name the obstructionist that he was referring to. His reply was: "Well, you for one are obstructing; you are an obstructionist." I do not know whether he used the word "obstructionist", but I draw your attention to a precedent on this word "obstructionist" and generally obstructing progress of the House. I refer you to *Hansard* of May 6, 1961, page 4459. Mr. Churchill, the House leader, said:

Those are his words, and the hon. members of the opposition are certainly showing themselves as obstructionists today.

Then Mr. Chevrier said:

I rise on a question of privilege, to take issue with what has been said by the House leader, who referred to our tactics as obstructionist.

Privilege—Mr. Stevens

Madam Speaker, I suggest this precedent will give you absolutely no trouble. Mr. Speaker said:

I think perhaps the minister would like to modify the word "obstructionist". I will give him the opportunity to do so. As far as the question of privilege arising out of the intervention of the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate is concerned, I have disposed of that. Really the discussion was continuing on that basis, and I would ask hon. members to desist.

Mr. Chevrier then said:

I rise on a question of privilege. We have been charged by the House leader and another hon. member with using obstructionist tactics. What we have been doing is supporting the rules of this House and asserting the rights of Parliament. I ask you, sir, to invite the House leader and the hon. member for Calgary South to amend their language when they direct their attacks on us as obstructionists.

The House leader then said:

Mr. Speaker, if the word "obstruction" is objectionable—I do not think it is contrary to the rules—to hon. members on the other side I—

—will make an appropriate substitution.

Madam Speaker, that is the thrust of my question of privilege. We have a clear precedent on the word "obstructionist". I asked the minister who is an obstructionist in this House, and he named me. If you find that I have a prima facie case for my question of privilege, I would put the appropriate motion to you asking the hon. member to withdraw his statement.

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Minister of Supply and Services): Madam Speaker, on that point, I would be pleased to document the facts upon which the allegation relating to obstructionism by members opposite was made.

● (1630)

Madam Speaker: Order, please. We are not discussing whether some people are obstructing or not obstructing. By the way, it is a point of order. The question of unparliamentary language is not a question of privilege; it is a point of order and I will treat it as a point of order.

I think I can rule on it quite easily. The word "obstruct" without any context—and I am forever having trouble with Beauchesne's list; somehow the word is on both lists, the list of words which are unparliamentary and the list of words which are not unparliamentary. I am forever having trouble with that list.

The hon. member quoted a precedent. It depends very much upon the context of the debate in which the word was used this afternoon. It did not strike me as being particularly offensive, because my recollection is that the word was applied to a group of people, not to an individual. I refer to Erskine May which indicates that expressions which are unparliamentary when applied to individuals are not always so considered when applied to a whole party.

In the words pronounced by the Hon. Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Blais), I did not hear anything unparliamentary. But, of course, there is always the reservation that I will look at the blues, and if it appears to be unparliamentary, I would proceed to get the normal redress for the hon. member.