

The first count is this. In short, I should like to say that I am fully in favour of TV broadcasting, for it will bring about procedural changes in the House, an essential one of which should prevent hon. members of the opposition from making their views known, as some did today, while the government has no right to reply, thus showing the viewing public only one side of the coin.

The second reason I rose on a point of order is that—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I came to a decision—

[English]

Mr. Paproski: You cannot question the Speaker; sit down.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Alexander: You do not question the Speaker around here, sir.

Mr. Speaker: I made a decision with respect to the possible question of privilege raised by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton. I indicated that it does not constitute a question of privilege. It is something I rarely do. It has been contributed to by only one side. The matter is closed.

Mr. Yewchuk: Mr. Speaker, in regard to the point of order raised by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton, I feel further comments could be made because it is, indeed, a matter of order. I am referring to additional comments which would help to elaborate on the situation.

Mr. Speaker: I think the point was raised adequately by the House leader for the official opposition. It is a point which deals with attitudes of co-operation in the House. It does not deal with procedure, because there is no compulsion or requirement that the matter be dealt with any differently than it was—except the subject of co-operation which was raised. It was raised in the spirit of notice to the government with respect to attitudes of co-operation in the House. I do not know if that is a valid statement or not. I have to decide whether it is a procedural matter. If it is to be raised, it will have to be raised properly within the procedures of the House. It has not been done in that way, and the matter is now closed.

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[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Concerning the reply made to the question on the order paper under the name of the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert) which appeared in *Hansard* for October 17, 1977, on page 8213, I have checked and been assured that it was only by an oversight that this reply was shortened. The complete reply appears in *Hansard* for yesterday on page 62.

• (1222)

[English]

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. I am glad the parliamentary secretary has again raised

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this matter, which was originally raised yesterday by the Postmaster General. I wish to speak to the point of order.

The action taken by the Postmaster General in effect places in question in this House the role of the parliamentary secretary vis-à-vis the executive, or cabinet, in the House. I find that a rather peculiar procedure is now being brought into the proceedings of this House. At any point in time a minister on the treasury benches can, in fact, rise and disclaim responsibility for an answer provided on behalf of the department by parliamentary secretary.

If we are to have a system of parliamentary secretaries and a system involving ministerial responsibility, I very much doubt that it is in accordance with the procedures of this House that an answer by a parliamentary secretary can be disclaimed on a subsequent date by a minister. There are other vehicles and other ways by which a minister can admit the incompetence of his department, himself or his parliamentary secretary, other than bringing it in under a point of order.

We now have answers provided by parliamentary secretaries to legitimate questions on the order paper. It is not proper for ministers then to go around this country and say that it was not the minister who answered, but a parliamentary secretary, and what does he know? He can say he has been misinterpreted, the parliamentary secretary is not very bright, or there was a mistake and therefore it is not binding, on the government.

If this practice is to be carried to its logical conclusion, the only attitude that we on this side can take is that anything provided by a parliamentary secretary is not to be believed or accepted as a valid response by the government, and that unless we ask the minister himself we cannot use the answer for the basis of debate.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. As I understood it yesterday—and I want to keep this matter in correct perspective—the Postmaster General was saying that the answer he provided was not the one the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council gave to the House. It was not his own parliamentary secretary who was involved; it was the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council, whose responsibility it is to table answers, on behalf of all ministers, to written questions.

Mr. Blais: Mr. Speaker, I regret that the time of the House is being spent on a matter such as this. The hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar could have cleared this up himself if he had read the context exactly. He is following in the footsteps of the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton—misusing the time of the House in order to get some publicity in front of the cameras.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Blais: I know that Your Honour is very much aware of that. I hope hon. gentlemen on the other side will employ a little more judgment in the use of House time, in view of the fact that we are experimenting in this House with a very powerful medium. They should practice more responsibility than they are. The hon. member's position—I refer to the hon.