

Privilege—Mr. Friesen

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member is obviously arguing the question. I have said that I will reserve on this matter. The hon. member has told the House that the expenses allowed for constituency offices have been increased, and that is true—

Mr. Nowlan: But I have not finished that sentence!

Madam Speaker: That should be helpful to the hon. member rather than otherwise. However, the debate is closed on this particular point.

I shall now hear the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock-North Delta (Mr. Friesen) on a question of privilege.

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

Madam Speaker: The hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) on a point of order.

Mr. Nielsen: Madam Speaker, in one sentence, I simply want to inform you that, because of the importance and relevance of those guidelines, I will be obtaining a copy of Treasury Board guidelines for the establishment of ministerial offices. I shall provide you with that copy so that it might be considered when you are considering the whole question.

Madam Speaker: That might be helpful and I thank the hon. member. The hon. member for Surrey-White Rock-North Delta on a question of privilege.

MR. FRIESEN—USE OF CONSTITUENCY OFFICES

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta): Madam Speaker, I rise on a matter which touches upon the privileges of all members of the House. I believe that when Your Honour has heard the evidence that I shall present, you will find there is a *prima facie* case of privilege.

It has always been my contention, and I am sure it is the belief of all members of the House, that we were elected to serve not only those people who voted for us but those who voted against us, as well as those who did not vote at all.

It is understandable that, after a hard fought campaign with emotions running high, some people might feel some reserve or hesitation about having a meeting with their Member of Parliament if he or she is not of the same political persuasion. That is unfortunate, but there is that possibility. It is therefore all the more important for an MP to serve all constituents. We must remove every possible impediment which might discourage citizens from seeking our help. Therefore, it is imperative that constituency offices do not advertise the political affiliation of the member who occupies that office.

My question of privilege arises out of impropriety on the part of some members of this House in the use of the services provided to them by the House of Commons and the privileges associated therewith, so that they might better discharge their responsibilities to their constituents as the Member of Parliament for that constituency.

The actions of these members, whether deliberate or not, have called into question the ability of all other members to serve their constituents in as non-political a way as possible when dealing with case work, and possibly have misled constituents into believing that one political party, rather than the elected member of that electoral district, represents them in the House of Commons.

Furthermore, and most important, it is against the rules established by the House of Commons under the guidelines, "Allowances and Services" to use the services in any other way for the constituency office. I quote Section 8, paragraph 9 as follows:

The constituency office may not be used by electoral campaign committees and may not be located in political party headquarters.

This regulation finds its authority under the Standing Committee on Management and Members' Services, as provided by Standing Order 65(1)(s).

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Hon. members are well acquainted with the rules governing the services which they can offer their constituents. I should like the hon. member to tell me the point that he is trying to develop. Who has breached what rule, and is it a rule of the House of Commons? I have to remind the hon. member that the rules governing these services are policed by members themselves, who delegate that authority to the Standing Committee on Management and Members' Services. I do not know at this point, but this might not be properly addressed to the Chair.

Mr. Friesen: Madam Speaker, I would refer you to the telephone directory for the lower mainland of British Columbia. On page 820 there appears in bold face type the heading, "New Democratic Party of B.C." Under that heading is listed the NDP office of Burnaby-Edmonds and all the other provincial constituency offices. Scattered among them is the telephone number of the office of the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell), with his office address and phone number. When I cross-reference that with his name, Mr. Waddell, I find that the address is the same as the number listed under the New Democratic Party of B.C. and the telephone number is the same. I suggest to you, Madam Speaker, that the constituency office that is used by the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway is doubling as the office for the political party.

What is even worse, I see that the hon. member for New Westminster-Coquitlam (Miss Jewett) is functioning in the same way. That office is listed as being at 722-12th Street, New Westminster, phone No. 521-8111. It lists Dennis Cocke MLA at the same address and gives the same phone number. Pauline Jewett is listed at the same address and with the same phone number. I throw in parenthetically, that it does not even mention the other half of her constituency which is Coquitlam, so I take it that it is not represented in that office.

When I cross-referenced the telephone directory, I found that under her private listing she has an office address and an office phone number which, coincidentally, happen to be the same as the NDP office on 12th Street in New Westminster.