

Privilege—Mr. Olivier

with visitors was posted at the main entrance to the House of Commons, I will take immediate steps to remedy a situation that I find unacceptable just as much as the hon. member does.

[*English*]

Mr. Tom Cossitt (Leeds-Grenville): Madam Speaker, I agree with the tenor of the remarks made by the hon. member, but I think the error that he has made is in casting aspersions on everybody in particular who works in all the buildings which he named. He did not say whether he meant the protective staff, the Mounted Police, or who it was. In other words, he is putting under a cloud all the public servants in this building who try to render bilingual services in both official languages.

I think that if a member is going to raise a matter of this kind he should be prepared to produce evidence, say what he is talking about, when it happened, give the names of the people who were unable to speak French or English, as the case may be, rather than come in here and cast aspersions on all the many good people who work in the protective service and the other services in this building.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, the hon. member has completely misunderstood the point of order, the question of privilege I should say, raised by my knowledgeable colleague for Longueuil. My colleague for Longueuil never had any intention of criticizing the good services given by civil servants or the staff of the House of Commons who do their best to answer the general public and more particularly hon. members in both languages. The hon. member for Longueuil had no such intention, on the contrary.

What he said with much pertinence is that it happened in some cases and he was careful not to give any names or specific examples today because he does not indulge in gossip like some other members in this House. He said that he was aware of two or three instances when people had not been able to get service in their language. I think that his complaint is justified and that the reaction of Madam Speaker to the comments made by the hon. member for Longueuil is also very justified and very favourable. I deplore that the hon. member should seek to brand these fully warranted remarks and objections as mere gossip. We are not here to single out civil servants who refuse to deal with people who demand to be served in the language of their choice, but to see to it that the policy of bilingualism is applied as much as possible, and that the Canadian public and hon. members are served in their own language. We are not here to write a gossip column where we can censure this or that civil servant for not doing a good job. What matters is the spirit of the remarks the hon. member for Longueuil (Mr. Olivier) has made, not an effort to show that such and such individuals have not done their duty. I am sure

the Chair has understood the gist of the remarks the hon. member for Longueuil has made, and that the hon. member opposite will realize from now on that these kinds of objections are not made for him to spice his gossip sheet but to make sure that the House of Commons is recognized as a truly bilingual institution.

Madam Speaker: I should like to put an end to this discussion, if I may. The purpose is not to accuse anybody of not speaking both languages but to assign duties. Surely there are places and areas on Parliament Hill where visitors should be dealt with in either of the official languages. The whole idea is to assign duties properly. I assume full responsibility for this, and I shall personally investigate the facts which the hon. member for Longueuil (Mr. Olivier) has brought to light.

[*English*]

MR. HNATYSHYN—STATEMENT MADE BY POSTMASTER GENERAL DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): I rise on a question of privilege arising out of the exchange today in the question period involving the Postmaster General (Mr. Ouellet). I am sorry that the Postmaster General is not here, but I feel that it is incumbent upon me, as a member of this House, to raise this question of privilege at the earliest opportunity because, in my estimation, in my submission, the Postmaster General has cast aspersions, not only on the members of this House, but also with respect to the operation under the Standing Order, and indeed, on the Chair, Madam Speaker.

The Postmaster General, in response to a question from the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale), indicated that he appreciated receiving a question, because in effect he suggested that a device had been used by members of the opposition in moving motions under Standing Order 43, that somehow this was wrong, and not a procedure in accordance with the privileges and rights of members of Parliament.

An hon. Member: They lacked courage.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: They lacked courage with respect to moving motions under this particular provision.

I take very serious exception to that suggestion in view of the fact that there is a specific provision for the moving of motions under Standing Order 43. The Postmaster General will know that there is opportunity, in the event that unanimous consent is granted to the motion, to debate the issue, and for the Postmaster General to participate, as any other member of this House, with respect to any motion that is moved.

I resist the temptation to suggest that the Postmaster General is unfair and that he is, in fact, thin-skinned, and that he is a person who very often resorts to this kind of underhanded device. But I will quote, in support of this particular statement of privilege, citation 145 in the fourth edition of Beauchesne's, in which it states very clearly that no member, including a minister of the Crown, shall stand in his place and impute