

Privilege

NAYS

Members

Allmand	Anawak
Angus	Arseneault
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)	Barrett
Bélair	Benjamin
Black	Blackburn (Brant)
Blaikie	Boudria
Butland	Caccia
Callbeck	Campbell (South West Nova)
Catterall	Clancy
Comuzzi	Crawford
Fisher	Flis
Fontana	Foster
Fulton	Gaffney
Gagliano	Gauthier
Grey (Beaver River)	Harvard
Harvey (Edmonton East)	Heap
Hopkins	Hovdebo
Hunter	Jordan
Kaplan	Karpoff
Keyes	Kristiansen
Langan (Mission—Coquitlam)	Laporte
LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso)	Lee
Maheu	Manley
Marleau	McGuire
Mifflin	Milliken
Mills	Murphy
Nunziata	Pagtakhan
Parent	Parker
Peterson	Rideout
Riis	Robichaud
Rocheleau	Rodriguez
Rompkey	Samson
Simmons	Stewart
Taylor	Vanclief
Volpe	Waddell
Walker	Whittaker
Wood	Young (Gloucester)
Young (Beaches—Woodbine)—75	

• (1150)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I declare the motion carried.

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PRIVILEGE

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege arising from the vote we have just taken. I want very quickly to refer to Beauchesne's Fifth Edition and simply remind the House what parliamentary privilege includes.

Section 16 reads:

Parliamentary privilege is the sum of the peculiar rights enjoyed by each House collectively as a constituent part of the High Court of Parliament, and by Members of each House individually, without which they could not discharge their functions and which exceed those possessed by other bodies or individuals.

It goes on:

The privileges of Parliament are rights which are "absolutely necessary for the due execution of its powers". They are enjoyed by individual Members, because the House cannot perform its functions without unimpeded use of the services of its Members.

Having said that, for many days now my colleagues and I have had petitions that we have been asked by our constituents to present in the House of Commons. Petitioners make it very clear both in their presentations to myself as a member—and I am sure I am speaking on behalf of most members of the House, including members of the government—that they want us to present their views in the House of Commons.

This is a right that goes back many hundreds of years, the right of a citizen to petition the Parliament of Canada. The government, as a result of this motion and previous motions, is making this responsibility that a member takes on impossible.

That is why I really believe that our rights as members are being breached and our privileges as members are being breached. We are not able to serve our constituents as we ought. One of the most fundamental rights has been denied, not only us as members but the constituents we represent.

That is only one aspect. There are also—

Mr. McDermid: You stop the work of the House all the time. What are you talking about? You are being silly. You stop the work of the House all the time.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I hear an interjection. Somebody is simply saying that we are stopping the work on the GST from time to time. That has nothing to do with the rights of the members of the House of Commons.

We have a right to present petitions on behalf of our constituents. That is simply part of the argument.

The other part of the argument is that there are many members who have been asked by constituent groups to present private members' bills and private members' motions on their behalf.

We have gone to the legal departments and asked the legal clerks to assist us in creating and developing private members' bills that reflect the views of our constituents. Most recent, on behalf of a group of cattlemen from western Canada who are concerned about the cattle rustling that was going on in all parts of Canada, and because the government had failed to act in ways that various cattle organizations had requested, I was asked