

*Questions of Privilege*

I wish to come to my reason for being concerned about the implication raised by the Hon. Minister of wrongdoing on our part during Question Period. If we compare this with what has gone on in Newfoundland, what do we find? First, a leaflet has been mailed by the Conservative Government to every citizen in Newfoundland. It is a coloured brochure. When was it mailed? After the writs were issued. Who paid for it? The people of Canada, not the Conservative Party.

**Mr. Crosbie:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Second, there was a half hour television program going into every home in the Province of Newfoundland. Who paid for that, after the writs were issued? I will tell you that it was not the Conservative Party of Canada, it was the people of Canada who were paying for that. That is a disgrace.

**Mr. Fulton:** Snake bellies.

**Mr. Crosbie:** Do you want a loan of the tape?

**Mr. Broadbent:** We totally welcome the comparison of the two different types of mailing; one that came out of my office which was paid for by my Party in the publication and in the mailing before the writs were issued, and another produced by the Government which was paid for by the people of Canada after the writs were issued.

The Minister should have the decency to stand up and resign.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

• (1520)

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Parliamentary Secretary on the same consolidated question of privilege.

**Mr. Doug Lewis (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to participate in this consolidated question of privilege. I think it is quite clear that there is a dispute here. However, I would say to the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) that we take him at his word. If in fact the printing was paid for prior to the election being called it does not become part of election expenses. If in fact the postage was paid for prior to the election being called, we agree that it does not become part of election expenses.

I call upon the Hon. Member to produce the proof, not here and now, I appreciate that. If in fact it has been paid for, not only the printing, but the paper, the envelope, the cost of transporting it to the postal station, and the postage, I appreciate that. I take the Hon. Member at his word because I have never had reason to doubt his word on something like this. I call upon the Hon. Member and his Party to prove positively and absolutely that everything was paid for at the time that it was done, not when the complaint arose, in February when this blatant letter was sent out using, I might add, not New Democratic Party paper, not New Democratic

Party letterhead, but the letterhead of the office of the Leader of the New Democratic Party. There is no sign on this that it is election material. I appreciate that, but there is no sign on it that it is not a blatant attempt to misuse not only the stationery but the office of the Leader of the New Democratic Party in asking that "you will work with me to elect a New Democratic Member of Parliament in the coming by-election in St. John's East".

I remind the Hon. Member of his comments on May 1, 1986, "Political Parties are responsible for their propaganda. Why does the Conservative Party not pay for this propaganda". I call upon the Leader of the New Democratic Party to prove that they paid for this propaganda in February prior to the writ being issued, that they paid full value for all of it, that is, the typing of it, its reproduction, the paper, the letterhead, and the envelope.

I have one curious question. If in fact this was all paid, and if in fact there was no effort to use the frank, I raise one question for my hon. friend, why was the frank on the envelope? If in fact it was paid for, full-fledged and with no problem, why was the frank on the envelope? That is the question we must ask ourselves.

**Mr. Broadbent:** I will be happy to deal with all those.

**Mr. Lewis:** That is fine. I would have thought the Hon. Member, having raised a question of privilege, would be prepared to give the House the benefit of that. This question has been part of a deliberate pattern by the New Democratic Party to raise this kind of thing. The Hon. Member for Kootenay West (Mr. Brisco) on October 16, 1986 raised a blatant political message by way of a mass mailing on the B.C. election campaign solely for political gain brought about by the brother of the current, or I guess soon to be departed, Leader of the New Democratic Party in B.C. In part the letter said—and it was probably written by the same wordsmith in the New Democratic Party offices—of course it was all paid for, and the fact that the frank was on the envelope did not mean anything—"we are asking you to join with us in getting to work to elect the next provincial New Democratic Party. Phone your local campaign headquarters and get involved now". That was not even federal. In the last instance it was not even federal. It was part of a designed campaign to take a free ride on the back of Canadian taxpayers for individual political purposes, whether provincial or federal.

I want to ask the Leader of the NDP a question because we all want to know the answer. Is he gearing up for the next municipal election campaign somewhere? Are we to use the frank for that too? It is about time that somebody stood their ground and acted honourably in the House.

I want to point out what has been done on the other side of the question. In an earlier Parliament the Hon. Member for Yorkton—Melville (Mr. Nystrom) raised a question about a committee that was set up by the Minister of Transport to study rail line abandonment. Once the question of privilege was raised, our Party paid for it without question. It is