

case, she may in fact have inadvertently violated a number of Standing Orders, procedures and parliamentary traditions herself.

Mr. Gerry St. Germain (Mission—Port Moody): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member cites members of the Conservative Party, and I think it is totally unfair that she should do so. I was one of the members who sat on the committee when that particular item was selected to be voted on. We certainly treated it like a private Member's Bill in the spirit of parliamentary reform.

I believe that the Hon. Member is merely facing a situation of private Members exercising their rights under the auspices of parliamentary reform. That is simply it.

Mr. Speaker: As I have indicated, I listened very carefully to the Hon. Member for Broadview—Greenwood (Ms. McDonald), the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) and the Hon. Member for Mission—Port Moody (Mr. St. Germain). In the interests of erring on the side of caution in this matter, I will reserve.

I can indicate to the Hon. Member that certainly part of her complaint about the speed or otherwise of the passage of her Bill is something I do not look upon as a question of privilege. I can indicate that I am having some trouble accepting the proposition that because the Hon. Member was unsuccessful in a vote in committee with respect to swearing a witness, that that amounts to a question of privilege.

However, the Hon. Member has made some pretty severe allegations about the chairperson. The Chair is conscious of the fact that the chairperson is appointed by the Chair although the other members of the committee are not appointed by the Chair.

As I say, from an abundance of caution and in order to give this matter every careful consideration, I will reserve and return to the House on it at an appropriate time. I hope that any comment I may have to make then might be helpful. Before I close off, I see that the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister is rising and I will hear him.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, in your usual manner of exercising an abundance of caution, for which I compliment you, I think the other point should be made, and I was remiss in not making it. Since the chairman and deputy chairman have been imputed in this, it might be appropriate, in the consideration of this matter before you make a final decision, that they may have the opportunity to be heard as well.

Mr. Speaker: I take with careful note the intervention of the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister, and if in any way it would seem appropriate to hear both Hon. Members further before I should make any decision I will do so. I want to be absolutely sure that this particular matter is handled as fairly as possible.

Privilege—Mr. Robinson

• (1520)

Again, in closing, I might say to the Hon. Member for Broadview—Greenwood that the Chair, in suggesting that part of her complaint is not a question of privilege, is not in any way ruling or giving an opinion as to the force of the complaint or, for that matter, the reason for it. I want her to know that I am speaking procedurally and not trying to stand in judgment on things in respect of which it is really not the role of the Chair to stand in judgment.

I will do the best I can and report back to the House. I thank Hon. Members for their courtesy and contribution.

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PRIVILEGE

JUSTICE AND SOLICITOR GENERAL—VISIT BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE TO MILLHAVEN INSTITUTION

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, this morning I gave Your Honour notice of a serious question of privilege concerning certain events which took place earlier this week in Kingston, Ontario, during a visit to that city by the Standing Committee on Justice and Solicitor General. The standing committee decided to undertake a comprehensive study of sentencing, parole and related matters involving corrections in Canada. For the purposes of that study we decided to hold hearings in a number of centres, indeed, to visit a number of correctional facilities, meet with parole officers and others involved in parole, sentencing and corrections.

Your Honour will be well aware of the significance of a study of this nature, having been in this House when the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, as it then was, chaired by a distinguished parliamentarian, Mark MacGuigan, now Mr. Justice MacGuigan, conducted a similar study and reported to this House some 10 years ago. It is a serious and important subject about which Canadians have a great deal of concern.

Seven members of the standing committee arrived in Kingston on Sunday evening and began the hearings with a tour of the Collins Bay institution on Monday morning. At that time it was apparent that there was a great deal of interest in the work of the standing committee on the part of officials from national headquarters. Indeed, a number of those officials accompanied the committee from Ottawa, as well as the legislative assistant of the Solicitor General (Mr. Kelleher). The committee was somewhat surprised, I think it is fair to say, at the interest displayed in our work by those officials, as well as obviously being pleased.

The committee indicated to those people that while they were free to participate in any public aspects of the visit, any meetings which took place with officials of the correctional service, the parole service or others should be in the absence of those officials for reasons which I think are quite clear. We