

Privilege—Mr. Crosbie

the publication complained of and for its mailing. He also pointed out that the material was distributed before the writ for the by-election in St. John's East was issued.

[*Translation*]

In the course of his intervention, the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Lewis) indicated that he took the Hon. Member from Oshawa at his word. I am sure the House will appreciate the tradition of honour that has served us so well in the past and acknowledge that the assurances given by the Hon. Member for Oshawa have at least satisfied that aspect of the question.

[*English*]

I come now to a determination of whether or not a prima facie case of breach of privilege has been established. I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Hon. Member for Windsor West (Mr. Gray). He dealt with the essentials of the matter in underlining the restrictive application of privilege and pointing out, with relevant quotations, that the privileges of Parliament are rights which are absolutely necessary to enable Members to fulfil their functions. It seems to the Chair that nothing which has been complained of has in any way obstructed the House or any of its Members in carrying out the activities for which they were elected.

I must therefore find that no convincing case relating to privilege has been made, but I would not dismiss the issue, out of hand, for it has triggered a considerable amount of concern on both sides of the House. I believe it is necessary to re-examine the guidelines which apply to the use of the parliamentary frank and the distribution of bulk and householder mailings and determine what changes in our practice, if any, are desirable in order to remove the use of these facilities from any suspicion of impropriety.

[*Translation*]

I therefore suggest that the Standing Committee on Management and Members Services examine the question and make recommendations as appropriate.

[*English*]

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Of course I would not want in any way to challenge your wise rulings. In the reference you are suggesting to the committee, I am wondering whether it could also consider whether or not these rules apply when a special rate is given a member to send out a householder.

For example, in this particular case, the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) was allowed to pay \$201 to send out 35,566 pieces of mail to St. John's East. The question which should be addressed is whether the same rules apply to this kind of special rate, fantastically cheap postal rate—

Mr. Broadbent: You are just so petty.

Mr. Crosbie: —whether partisan propaganda should be allowed to be sent out in that manner, or whether the same rules should be applied—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: —to the Hon. Member for Oshawa—

Mr. Broadbent: You are a jerk, Crosbie.

Mr. Crosbie: —whether the rules of the House—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Copps: Tory socialists, they are all alike. Pull up the sheets, Tory socialists.

Mr. Gauthier: Kiss and make up.

Mr. Speaker: Order. What the viewing public cannot see is the continuation of the debate. However, I think I should point out and draw the Hon. Minister's attention to the second to last paragraph in the ruling. "I believe it is necessary to re-examine the guidelines which apply to the use of the parliamentary frank and the distribution of bulk and householder mailings and determine what changes in our practices, if any, are desirable".

I want to assure the Hon. Minister that the Chair's suggestion to the committee—and it is only that; I cannot order the committee—takes into account the very point which he has raised.

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Speaker, on another point of order, I wonder whether Your Honour could rule whether or not the term "jerk" is parliamentary.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: The Hon. Member for Nickel Belt—

An Hon. Member: John Jerk Crosbie.

Mr. Crosbie: The New Democratic Party is not led by a statesman, that is for sure.

Some Hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Crosbie: The honourable jerks opposite should be—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Minister has risen to ask the Chair if I think the word "jerk" is unparliamentary. I am not sure whether a clear allegation was made that anyone had in fact said that word. However, I want to tell the Hon. Minister that I did not hear it. Of course, if I heard it repeatedly, I might have to make a ruling. However, I think under the circumstances and if the word was used, it was not used by any member in formal debate. As I said, the Chair did not hear it.

Of course, if it is used again, I would invite any Hon. Member who felt offended to rise. Perhaps if a number of members felt that the word applied to them, they might all rise and bring the matter to my attention.

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Clean no more; he is a rough, tough guy.

Mr. Speaker: Tabling of documents.