

Privilege—Mr. Rae

both sides. There were four members on this side who rose. Before hearing the hon. minister I said that I would have to hear him. If the hon. member was listening he will remember that I said that I will now have to hear the hon. President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard). In all fairness, I must hear the arguments on both sides of the House.

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Madam Speaker: The Chair should also have a chance to explain. In doing so I try to be brief and to take as little as possible of the time of the House. I explained what I was doing. The hon. member did not quite understand what I had said. I think I have a chance to explain to him. It is now not too late to explain an action. I hope we can all explain our actions in the House. I know now that the hon. member agrees that I should be able to give this explanation.

I will now hear the hon. member for Broadview-Greenwood on a point of order.

Mr. Rae: Madam Speaker, I neglected to move the necessary motion. I would like to do so now. If you do find, Madam Speaker, that I have a prima facie case, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles):

That the matter of ministers of the Crown being appointed as responsible for ridings already represented by a duly sworn Member of Parliament be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Speaker: We have heard several contributions in the House which have come close to the matter we are now discussing. I have ruled a few times on matters which come close to the matter which has been brought up today. I do not find in the question that was raised a prima facie case of privilege.

I want to remind hon. members of the duties of the Chair as defined in Standing Order 12(1), which sets out that the duties of the Chair do not extend to regulating in any way the responsibilities assigned to cabinet ministers, either officially or in the way described by the Solicitor General (Mr. Kaplan).

It is true that there is a dispute with respect to this action. There is also a judgment as to the propriety of this action. It is different on both sides of the House. It is not in the Chair's competence to determine or rule on the propriety of actions. Therefore, I recognize that there is a complaint. The matter has been brought up in the House in the form of a question of privilege, but I cannot find that there is a prima facie case of a question of privilege in this case.

Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown): Madam Speaker, I, too, rise on a point of order. In order that I might inform my constituents who the minister responsible for my constituency is, could you, Madam Speaker, request the government to table the list of ministers who are responsible, so that I may go and appeal to him as a Member of Parliament and be able to direct my constituents to him?

Madam Speaker: I must tell the hon. member that I cannot request the government to do any such thing. The hon. member might pursue this matter during question period or at another time when the question can be debated. I am sorry that I cannot accommodate the hon. member. According to the rules I am unable to ask the government to do any such thing.

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton-Strathcona): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Is it implicit in your ruling that such a matter may not also be considered by the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections?

Madam Speaker: Yes, it is implicit in my ruling, since I did not find a prima facie case of a question of privilege. If I had found such was the case then I would have put the hon. member's motion to the House and the House could have decided after debate, or without debate, whether or not they wished to send it to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Mr. Gordon Taylor (Bow River): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. If undermining a member in his own riding does not fall within a question of privilege, then what is a question of privilege?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Speaker: I have explained that many times in the House. I refer the hon. member to definitions which I have given quite frequently in some of my rulings with regard to privilege. From time to time I attempt to remind members of the definition of privilege as given by Erskine May or by Beauchesne. I do this in order to remind members what really constitutes a question of privilege, since we often hear some questions which cannot be recognized as questions of privilege. I think it is important to say from time to time in the House that members apply themselves to raising questions of privilege which are legitimate. That is why I define what it is from time to time. I would refer the hon. member to some of my rulings.

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POINT OF ORDER

MR. BAKER (NEPEAN-CARLETON)—CONDUCT OF MEMBERS

Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Speaker enjoys a particular position in this House. May I ask whether you would consider making a comment on the propriety of practices—perhaps not today—from the point of view of protecting the members of this House from practices of other members of the House, which at least a substantial number of us think are reprehensible? This has been the practice of your predecessors from time to time.

I would like to bring a case to mind. There was a case involving a report commissioned by the former minister of transport, the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski). That report was found wanting by Mr. Speaker and he