

of the television cameras and the still cameras behind the curtains, which I understand even after a limited three month intended experimental period are still with us. I am looking into the development of that aspect. I am concerned whether or not the guidelines that were set out in the resolution installing electronic *Hansard* by way of television cameras in the House are being followed. I will likely have a further question of privilege with respect thereto when I have completed my research. I merely flag the matter now so as to bring to your attention our concerns that there are very serious questions to be raised in this area of technological change and advance which may well have overcome, dangerously so, the procedures and practices in the House. I will raise these matters probably following the Remembrance Day recess. In view of that, you may wish to defer today's question and decide upon both at the same time, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. David Smith (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council):** Madam Speaker, I have listened with interest to the remarks made by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), and I do not find that he has a question of privilege at all.

**Mr. Deans:** It is not up to you.

**Mr. Smith:** The remarks which the hon. member made are to be found in *Hansard* for November 4, 1981 at page 12503. He said:

I asked that my microphone be activated. I know that the operator heard me ask because he shook his head and made a gesture of helplessness because it had to be your decision that the microphone be turned on.

The only conclusion I can draw from these remarks is that somehow the hon. member for Yukon was under the delusion that somebody other than yourself could recognize him.

It is important to bear in mind Standing Order 12, which refers to the Speaker preserving order and decorum. It is also important to bear in mind Standing Order 28, which reads:

Every member desiring to speak is to rise in his place, uncovered, and address himself to Mr. Speaker.

Citation 117 of Beauchesne states, with reference to the Speaker:

He calls upon members to speak—

● (1530)

What could be clearer than that? It is certainly not the operator of the microphone system who calls upon a member to speak; it is the Speaker who does so.

If one looks at Erskine May's seventeenth edition at page 247, one will see that it states in reference to the Speaker "that he calls upon members to speak, a choice which is now never disputed." That is the phrase that is used in Erskine May to describe the duty of the Speaker in this situation. It sounds to me today as if somehow the hon. member for Yukon is in fact disputing that.

### *Privilege—Mr. Nielsen*

Also in Erskine May, at page 436, we find the following:

In so large and active an assembly as the House of Commons, it is absolutely necessary that the Speaker should be invested with authority to repress disorder and to give effect, promptly and decisively, to the rules and orders of the House.

What sort of disorder would we have if we had a bunch of members calling up to the operator of the microphone system? I am not clear as to the point the hon. member is trying to make. Is he somehow attacking the probity of the employees? If so, I would state that that is highly irregular and most unfortunate because they are not in a position to defend themselves and the judgments which they make. I would submit, in fact, that they do not make any judgments. They simply seek your guidance as to who in fact is being recognized.

It would seem to me there is no question at all as to what the question is on any other issue than perhaps those issues which may arise during the question period. It would also seem to me that on that particular issue you have ruled, and you did so last week or it may have been the week before. The position you took was that it was up to members on the government side to ascertain among themselves who was in fact going to answer a question, regardless of to whom it may have been specifically addressed.

The criteria which may be used by members on the government side as to who will defer or not defer is something in which the Chair does not become involved. The criteria as to who is going to answer are ascertained and set by members of the government as between themselves.

I submit that with regard to anything other than question period, Beauchesne, Erskine May and the Standing Orders are all quite clear; the Speaker calls upon members to speak. The role and function of the operator of the microphone system is simply to carry out the instructions of the Speaker, and that presumably would be to activate the microphone of whichever member has been called upon to speak.

Having regard to whose microphone is to be turned on in question period in response to a question, that is something you have already ruled on and made quite clear. I am staggered that the hon. member for Yukon has indicated he may wish to pursue a further question of privilege, because I submit he does not have one here.

**Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain):** Briefly, Madam Speaker, I must confess that the argument by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) was fairly long, quite involved and a little difficult to follow in all of its content. The question, as I understand it, is with regard to what has occurred simply because of the introduction into the House of Commons of these new-fangled electronic devices and how one deals with them. I am sure that from time to time we will have to take a look at how procedure develops when we introduce newer methods of communicating. I am sure also that we have to be cognizant of the fact that, with the introduction of the microphone system, which has been here for some time, the method of catching the Speaker's eye and being recognized and the concurrent responsibility of those who operate the