

is completely appropriate. I think, however, that this goes one step further.

I know, Mr. Speaker, you will take a very serious look at this, but a matter of privilege related to this item has other precedents in this place. If this House does not move to protect our privilege, then the erosion of Parliament is complete and we might as well shut the place down.

**Hon. Bill Jarvis (Perth):** Concerning this very serious matter, Mr. Speaker, you are being urged by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard) to find no privilege if a person, such as my colleague from Peace River (Mr. Cooper), is put in a position where he opts to complain to a Minister. That is the basis of the argument put forward by the President of the Privy Council. He is saying that the Hon. Member for Peace River had an alternative. He could either write to the Minister and complain or he could raise the matter as privilege. The President of the Privy Council is now suggesting that because the Hon. Member chose both courses and because he did not name that employee in the House, he lacks the courage to do so.

**Mr. Pinard:** Right.

**Mr. Jarvis:** I say with respect to that point that it is not a question of lacking courage; it is a question of having civility, courtesy and of following the customs of this House.

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

**Mr. Jarvis:** It is only in extraordinary circumstances that one would name a public servant or a servant of a Crown corporation in this House.

**Mr. Pinard:** Typical Tory policy.

**Mr. Jarvis:** Custom dictates to the contrary because the individuals are not here to defend themselves.

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

**Mr. Jarvis:** I think this is crucial to your decision, Sir. The person to whom the Hon. Member spoke was addressing the Hon. Member, not in his or her own personal capacity but as a servant of the President of a Crown corporation of Canada. That is the key. It is the same as if I complained to someone on the staff of the President of the Privy Council and that person responded. The individual does not respond to me in a personal capacity but speaks to some degree for the Minister, as indeed this employee did who spoke on behalf of the President of Canada Post. It is absolutely crucial to this vital question of privilege that one should not have his or her ability to raise a question of privilege diluted by failure to name the individual. That is a basic element of decency, not a weakness in a question of privilege.

There is a second point which the President of the Privy Council conveniently ignores. The Hon. Member for Peace River has no more privileges than I, but it was well known to that employee that that particular Member speaks on behalf of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition with respect to Canada Post.

*Privilege—Mr. Cooper*

Therefore, that Member was speaking for all of us in that particular telephone conversation.

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

**Mr. Jarvis:** There is no way, in my view, that that question of privilege can be attacked in terms of its validity by the President of the Privy Council when he suggests that, having written to the appropriate Minister and not having named on the floor of the House the particular person to whom he spoke in the President's office of Canada Post, therefore no valid question of privilege exists.

I urge your very serious consideration, Mr. Speaker. I certainly support wholeheartedly the suggestion of the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) because I think it strikes at the very heart of our parliamentary privileges.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Marcel Roy (Laval):** Mr. Speaker, I listened very attentively to the Hon. Member's explanation, and it seems to me, in the light of the scarce amount of information he was able to provide, that if he had really had the courage to name the person, he would have had a genuine question of privilege. In fact, this is the same approach that was used in Waterloo with the Department of National Revenue: people are mentioned, and today they mentioned the President of Canada Post Corporation, who was identified, but the person to whom the Hon. Member referred and from whom he supposedly received threats, was not.

I feel this is just another witch hunt to discredit the dedicated employees of the Public Service, without mentioning any names but making a blanket charge and putting the blame on everyone by identifying the President of Canada Post.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think this is a question of privilege. If the Hon. Member wishes to pursue the same route as for the Department of National Revenue, he should rise in the House and say this person's name, so that the situation will not be taken to apply to all employees of the Public Service. That is blackmail!

[*English*]

**Mr. Speaker:** I invite Hon. Members to be brief at this point.

**Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain):** Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to speak on this matter but I cannot believe the argument coming from the other side. I thought the Hon. Member for Peace River (Mr. Cooper) made his case very well. If, in fact, the circumstances turn out to be as he described them, and I do not for one moment doubt that they will, it would appear that he has established a prima facie case for the Speaker to rule on.

However, I do want to deal with the question of names. It would be unfair, I think, to expect the Member to name the individual now.

**Mr. Pinard:** Why?