

*Privilege—Mr. Andre*

high esteem. However, I say to the House that we are privileged in here because we can say what we want to say within the walls of the House. We abuse the privileges of the House, as well as the privileges of the Minister, if we say things in the House that we will not say outside because, as my hon. colleague who is a lawyer knows very well, an inference is drawn when somebody works as a volunteer for an organization, is employed with an oil company, and asks for money on behalf of the Minister and the Minister is asked whether he was involved in any decisions. The Hon. Member knows very well that that is innuendo and slander by innuendo.

When one does that, one abuses not only the privileges of the Minister but all volunteers out there working in our riding associations. Every volunteer out there who works for me or for other Members of the House is slandered when a Member uses his ability in the House to say something which cannot be acted upon.

I know this matter has been raised as a question of privilege. If you find, Mr. Speaker, that it is a question of privilege after listening to the argument, I would be prepared to support my hon. colleague in framing the motion to send the matter to the Standing Committee on Elections, Privileges and Procedure.

**Mr. Waddell:** Mr. Speaker, I do not understand how it can be slander if I am not accusing the Minister of conflict of interest. How can it be slander if I specifically said the contrary in the question?

I believe as strongly as the Hon. Minister that people should be active in the political process, and I agree that oilmen have to be active in the political process for all Parties. Surely I am entitled to ask tough questions in respect of the Minister's involvement in these decisions, whether government companies have been involved, and whether the Minister may want to take steps to make changes. His fund raiser, while the matter is possibly before the Government, may not want to do it and may want to have someone else do it for a while.

**Mr. Andre:** Why?

**Mr. Waddell:** Not to give the appearance of any conflict of interest to the Canadian public. That is where the Minister and I differ on the particular matter.

**Mr. Andre:** You are making an accusation.

**Mr. Waddell:** I repeat once again that I have not made any accusation of conflict of interest.

**Mr. Shields:** An innuendo.

**Mr. Waddell:** I have not made any innuendo. I have asked a tough question, and I think I am entitled in the House to ask these kinds of questions.

**Mr. Andre:** To slander anybody you want!

**Mr. Speaker:** Sometimes there is a temptation to argue such cases directly between and among Members and not through

the Chair. This gives the Chair some difficulty, as Hon. Members can understand.

The Chair's responsibility in this regard is to hear the complaint and to hear very carefully the defence. It is very important for the Chair to know exactly what position the Hon. Member for Vancouver—Kingsway is taking in the argument, because that of course affects the approach the Chair takes when delivering a ruling in answer to a complaint brought to the Chair. With the greatest respect to all Hon. Members, it does not assist the Chair to have comments tossed around in the Chamber and not put through the Chair, especially when the Hon. Member for Vancouver—Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) is making his defence. I think this tends to make it more difficult for the Chair rather than easier.

● (1530)

As I say, I heard the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary quoting one of my own rulings of a few days ago to which I have just referred. I assure all Hon. Members that the Chair does take this kind of problem very seriously. It is also the reason that all argument ought to be very carefully heard and not interrupted.

The Hon. Member for Yorkton—Melville (Mr. Nystrom).

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville):** I will be very brief, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to express the opinion that regardless of whether or not the Minister may feel he has a legitimate beef, disagreement or complaint, what was contained in the question of the Hon. Member for Vancouver—Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) I do not think in any way makes it a question of privilege.

What you are seeing here is a disagreement. The Hon. Member for Vancouver has said that he is not accusing the Minister of a conflict of interest or of wrongdoing. He was just asking whether or not it is proper that the Minister should now be involved in a potential cabinet decision when a fund raising letter just recently went out from a vice-president of Amoco, involved in the possible takeover of Dome, on behalf of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. The question is whether or not that is appropriate. Surely to goodness that is a legitimate question. There was no implication that there might be a conflict of interest. The Member was asking whether or not it is the proper action by a cabinet Minister. I do not see any precedents in the rules of this place, and I have been here quite a while, where this could in any possible way be a question of privilege. I think it is a disagreement between two Members and nothing more than that, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Chair will hear other Hon. Members in a moment.

It is the responsibility of the Chair in a situation like this to be sure that the issue is very carefully defined. I take it from what the Hon. Member for Vancouver—Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) and from what the Hon. Member for Yorkton—Melville (Mr. Nystrom) have said that there was no intent on the part of the Member from Vancouver—Kingsway to accuse