



GORDON COPELAND
Independent MP

21 July 2008

Hon Margaret Wilson
Speaker of the House
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Dear Madam Speaker,

Re: Breach of privilege

Standing Order 164(1) requires all Members of the House to make a return of pecuniary interests in accordance with Part One of Appendix B. This includes a requirement to declare all gifts received of more than \$500 (Appendix B 7(1) (b)).

It had been widely reported in the press that Winston Peters received a gift of \$100,000 from Mr Owen Glenn. In addition, Mr Peters' lawyer Brian Henry is reported in the press as saying that other gifts were also made to the Minister's "legal fund" amounting, in total, to a further \$100,000. Mr Peters is reported as saying that he did not declare these gifts because he has an understanding with Mr Henry which ensures donors **names** are not passed on to him. However, since the gifts made were intended to assist Mr Peters' with his legal costs, he would of course know about the gifts themselves. However no gifts are recorded in the 2006, 2007, or 2008 Pecuniary Interests Register by the Member.

It seems to me that Mr Peters' failure to disclose the gifts received is therefore a breach of privilege pursuant to Standing Order 400 (h).

In addition to the non-disclosure of these gifts, I note that the relevant section of Appendix B also requires the name of each donor to be disclosed "if known or reasonably ascertainable by the member". It seems to me that this requirement cannot be nullified merely because the Minister asked his lawyer not to disclose that information to him.

In any event I raise this matter with you as a potential breach of privilege.

Yours sincerely,

Gordon F. Copeland M.P.

CC: Rt. Hon Winston Peters