

Committee conclusions

- 3.1 Having considered rulings made by successive Speakers in relation to Members displaying articles to illustrate their speeches, the Committee considers the current practice of the House of Representatives is well-established and has a sound basis. The Committee's analysis suggests that successive Chairs have enforced the practice of the House, ensuring consistency.
- 3.2 'Stunts' staged by both sides of the House over the years overstep what many members of the public would consider appropriate behaviour. Moreover, such stunts clearly contravene the rulings of successive Speakers and are in breach of the established practice of the House.

Events of the week of 25 May 2009

- 3.3 The Committee notes that the events of the week beginning 25 May 2009 received considerable attention from the media and may have had an adverse impact on the public perception of the House. Notwithstanding, it is clear that the Speaker's rulings were consistent with the established practice of the House.

Future inquiry

- 3.4 The public's engagement with the Parliament has changed over recent years, partly due to changes in technology, with consequential implications for the way the House of Representatives presents itself and interacts with the public. There may be scope for the House to take advantage of new technologies and this may necessitate adjustments in the way the House conducts its business. However, such considerations are not for the Committee on this occasion.

Julie Owens MP
Chair
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