

PUBLIC SERVICE

DISPUTE INVOLVING SHIPS' CREWS

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board. I wonder if he could advise the House why four Departments involved in the marine sector decided to put all their ships out to sea at four o'clock on Friday in order to prevent meetings with Public Service Alliance of Canada representatives in a number of cities across the country?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, as I advised the House last week, negotiations in this labour dispute resumed last week. Unfortunately, no settlement was reached. The labour representatives walked away from the table. We are prepared to continue negotiations following a new offer that was tabled by government officials, and we would very much hope to be able to resolve this conflict as we have resolved every other collective bargaining issue which has come up over the last several months.

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● (1500)

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED MISSTATEMENT BY MINISTER

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Nielsen) would like to stay in the House while I raise a matter of privilege. I see the Minister has now withdrawn, but I would like to raise—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Axworthy:—a matter of privilege. He suggested in the House that during the course of my tenure as a Minister I was involved with three other Ministers in having aircraft at the Winnipeg airport. That is simply not the truth.

Some Hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Axworthy: It is not the truth. I want the Minister to withdraw that remark. It is simply not a fact.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I think the Hon. Member knows full well that that is not a question of privilege.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker—

Some Hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It is not. Would the Hon. Member please resume his seat. I take it the Hon. Member is claiming that something was said which is not the case. The Hon. Member knows that there are decisions after decisions

Privilege

after decisions in the House that those are matters of dispute as to facts; those are not questions of privilege.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. It is not right in this House for any Member to say something which is not under dispute as to whether it is a fact when it is simply not a fact. This Minister and others use that technique all the time. I want him to withdraw that remark because it is not true and he should not be allowed to get away with that tactic.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Hon. Members know full well that if they have a matter which they want to put down by substantive motion, they should do so. There is no question of privilege here. If the Hon. Member wants to make a statement through a motion he has that right, or if he wishes to make a statement tomorrow as to what is his view of the facts he has that right, but there is no question of privilege here.

ALLEGED SLANDEROUS STATEMENTS

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, in answer to a question from a member of the Liberal Party, the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Nielsen) accused the President of the Liberal Party of making slanderous statements. I do believe, given your ruling, Mr. Speaker, in other areas, that that particular comment should be struck from the record.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Hon. Member will know that Members of this House have absolute free speech and the privilege of free speech. The only time the rules enter into the matter is when Hon. Members are saying something unparliamentary about another Member.

Ms. Copps: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Hon. Member may want to check that matter with the authorities, with her Whip or with her House Leader who can explain it to her.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS—LOSS OF POSITION WHEN
OPPOSITION DAY DESIGNATED

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question of privilege arises from the new process under which we are dealing with Private Members' Bills. As I think you are aware, Mr. Speaker, three Bills were drawn and went before the legislative committee which will come before the House for a vote.

On May 9, it was first scheduled that I would have the opportunity during Private Members' Hour that evening to debate my Bill. On May 9, as reported in *Hansard*, the Acting Speaker at that time ruled without prejudice that Bill C-270, dealing with the A-B line, would go to the bottom of the list, but that there would be an early discussion among House Leaders to come up with a new way of dealing with this matter in order to maintain the places of the 15 other Members.