

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, January 27, 1987

The House met at 11 a.m.

[English]

PRIVILEGE

COMMITTEE REPORT—POSSIBLE BREACH OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. Mr. Speaker, yesterday after Question Period I granted interviews to the media in the customary manner outside the doors of the House of Commons. During the course of conversations with journalists they queried me concerning the report of the Standing Committee on Elections, Privileges and Procedure with respect to the registration of paid lobbyists, which report is to be tabled later today in the House of Commons. While I refrained from referring specifically to the report, during my remarks on the general theme of the registration of lobbyists I may have inadvertently revealed some of the contents of the report to the media. After reviewing press clippings this morning, Mr. Speaker, I recognized one of the comments as being mine.

If my colleagues on the committee feel such is the case, as I understand it is at least in the one case, I apologize to the House, and more particularly to the Chairman of the committee, the Hon. Member for Peace River (Mr. Cooper), and to the Hon. Member for Okanagan—Similkameen (Mr. King), the Hon. Member for Prince George—Bulkley Valley (Mr. McCuish) and the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) with whom I have worked on this committee. More than anything else, I want the report to be adopted in the non-partisan reform manner which characterized our committee's very fruitful deliberation.

Mr. Albert Cooper (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, may I say to the House that we are happy to accept the Member's apology for his good wishes toward the committee, for the work that we have done in the past and for the work that we will continue to do in the future.

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, I will not sit here and let my hon. friend, the Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell (Mr. Boudria) take full responsibility for any inadvertent remarks. Yesterday after Question Period I, too, was accosted by a Mr. Iain Hunter from *The Ottawa Citizen* who wanted to get a copy of the report from me. I said that I could not give him a copy of the report because we had agreed that the matter would be dealt with at the press conference today. He then went on to question me about my response to the whole question of registering lobbyists and I discussed the matter in general. He

may have taken from my comments to him remarks which then found their way into his articles in the paper.

I want to say to my friend that I, too, was in the same situation and I apologize to our chairman if anything that I may have said that was misinterpreted by Mr. Hunter in his article. I believe that our report got unanimous agreement in the committee. That took some doing because we spanned the political spectrum from somewhere to the right of Genghis Khan to Karl Marx.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Rodriguez: I want to assure you, Mr. Speaker, that I sincerely hope nothing I said could throw any shadow on the fine work we did together as a committee.

Mr. Speaker: I want to thank all Hon. Members, certainly the Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell (Mr. Boudria) for coming into the Chamber and making the statement that he has made. I compliment the Hon. Member for Peace River (Mr. Cooper) for his response, and I thank the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) for his contribution.

I might say to all Hon. Members that this is a signal, a salutary example of how these matters ought to be settled among Hon. Members in this Chamber. I thank Hon. Members for their co-operation and good sense of propriety as to what this place is all about.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

VETERANS AFFAIRS

LOSS OF MICROFICHE IN THE MAIL

Hon. George Hees (Minister of Veterans Affairs): Just before I start my statement, Mr. Speaker, as the oldest living inhabitant of this place, I would just like to say that I have heard proceedings for many, many years and I want to congratulate the Members who have just made statements. That kind of sentiment makes this place a better place in which to live and work. I congratulate the Members on the attitude they have taken and for what they have said. What they did is very admirable, indeed.

I rise to inform the House of a very unfortunate incident involving loss of several microfiche sheets in the mail. The facts are quite straightforward.