

Transport and Communications

possession of the document, the investigation was dropped.

Under the circumstances, I think it is appropriate for the House to address itself, with concern, as to whether or not the investigation should have taken place in the first place. In that respect, I am sure all members of the House are grateful for the undertaking of the Solicitor General to look into the matter and to report further. Indeed, as the Solicitor General said to the House, he was not the incumbent of this office at that time, and I am sure his undertaking will be pursued to the comfort of members of the House.

But the question before us at this moment is not that one particularly but, rather, whether the remarks of the Solicitor General to this House constitute a question of privilege. In view of the fact that it was the hon. member himself who first intervened in the proceedings the previous day to put these facts on record, I am unable to find that any action by the Solicitor General constitutes a breach of the privileges of the hon. member, therefore, of any other member of the House. Therefore, I have to find that there is no prima facie question of privilege at the moment.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

CONCURRENCE IN SECOND REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. John Campbell (LaSalle-Émard-Côte Saint-Paul) moved that the second report of the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications, presented to the House on Thursday, November 21, 1974, be concurred in.

Mr. Reid: Mr. Speaker, I think this particular report raises some procedural points and I wonder if Your Honour would like to hear argument on them.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair has examined the report in question and is, indeed, deeply concerned about its orderliness. Briefly, the facts are that a private member's bill concerning the recapitalization of the British Columbia Telephone Company was presented in the House in proper order and referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications. That committee tabled its second report which made recommendations to the House concerning the deposit that was paid to the House of Commons on account of the fees payable upon the recapitalization of the company; that is to say, payable upon passage of the bill. The committee recommended that these funds be held in abeyance because of a possible change in the procedures of the House in respect of payment of these fees.

Upon study of that report, the Chair was in considerable doubt as to whether or not that was within the authority of the committee which had before it a bill for study. The following report of the committee recommended passage

[Mr. Speaker.]

of the bill without amendment. In fact, the bill was passed on Thursday last in private members' hour with one amendment which went forward with the unanimous consent of the House.

That report having been tabled, it is now moved that the House give concurrence to the report and to the recommendation that the deposit of some \$200,000 be held in abeyance until such time—I should not go further than that because until when is not absolutely clear. In any case, that report is before the House at the present time. The question is whether the committee has authority to go beyond the provisions of the bill and to make recommendations on matters which appear to be outside the scope of the bill entirely.

The Chair has some concern and is prepared to hear argument now, or to give hon. members an opportunity to prepare presentations upon the point of procedure and to hear argument at this time tomorrow. I am in the hands of the House in this regard. Perhaps we should defer the matter for 24 hours and hear argument tomorrow. One hon. member has given the Chair some precedents to examine, and it might be worth while if we were to hold the matter in abeyance until motions tomorrow, to call the motion at that time and to see hon. members who might wish to contribute to the question of procedure at that time. Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion stands.

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COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

TABLING OF JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED BY BRITISH COLUMBIA AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I wish to table, under Standing Order 41(2), copies in both official languages of the joint communiqué on Community Employment Strategy agreed to by the federal government and the province of British Columbia in Vancouver last Friday, November 29, this being the first we have signed with any provincial government.

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PENITENTIARIES

TABLING OF ANNUAL REPORT OF CORRECTIONAL INVESTIGATOR

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, when we established the position of correctional investigator one year ago, I promised to table the annual report of the correctional investigator even though there was no statutory requirement to do so. I should like, now, to table in this House the first annual report of the correctional investigator.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): It is an open government.