

At the time of the granting of those particular applications, Mr. J. Forester was a news director of CHOO radio, a local radio station in the town of Ajax. In fact, the New Horizons grant was to bring forward a senior citizens radio program. This man, who was a news director of CHOO radio at the time, was indeed involved in making representations to us so that these senior citizens would have such a radio program. In any event, Mr. Forester was not in my employ at the time and he was certainly not an employee of the government of Canada or the House of Commons.

On February 2, which is later than both of these grants, Mr. Joe Forester left the employ of CHOO radio and approached me for employment as one of my staff persons in the House of Commons. He was in fact hired as a second secretary in the House of Commons, operating here and in the constituency, dealing with constituency problems. I should point out that he did an excellent job.

Mr. Forester was hired on March 11, 1974, and continued in the employ of the House of Commons until May 23, 1974, when at my request in writing to my Ottawa office, I asked that the same gentleman be removed from my staff and put on a temporary leave of absence during the course of the election that was then being held. Even though he continued to serve as a constituency representative, I felt that that could be misinterpreted because he also helped me in my election. Therefore, I asked that he be given a leave of absence during that period and it was granted.

Mr. Forester remained on leave of absence from then until July 8, 1974, the date of the election, and was reintroduced on my staff on July 9, continuing until August 31, 1974. Since that time he has been an employee of the provincial government of Ontario in the department of the environment.

I think it is important to point out that when I hired this gentleman, in light of the fact he was a newspaperman and a broadcaster, he approached me to ask if he would have the right to perform free-lance functions which, I gather, is rather customary in that particular field of endeavour. I indicated to him that I had no objection, providing such activities did not interfere with his proper function as a servant of the House of Commons assigned to me as member of parliament for Ontario. With respect to any income he may or may not have had in respect of any extra-curricular activities with which he was involved, I felt it was either none of my business or that it was not an obligation of mine to pursue the matter. But if the hon. member would like me to make contact with him to provide him with such extraneous detail I would be delighted to do so.

● (1210)

The essential point, Mr. Speaker, and one which I think is more important than the wrong information which has been put before this House, is the casual approach as to the honour and integrity of another member of parliament, or the integrity of any other citizen without having the courtesy of giving notice of an intent to raise this question and, two, of not having the courtesy to approach me to find out what the facts really were. I would have been quite prepared to give him the facts and to have done any research to which he would have been entitled as to

Privilege—Mr. Cafik

those facts. I think it is really very bad news and a terrible example to do this kind of thing without the courtesy of what is commonly known as an examination for discovery of the facts.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cafik: I must admit that this is the aspect of the whole question which grieves me most, because I have a great deal of respect for the hon. member who raised this point. I must admit I am surprised and disappointed that he did not follow that particular course in order to acquaint himself with the facts which I think are relevant in this case.

Mr. Orlikow: It is really quite simple. I put a question on the order paper; it stayed on the order paper for some considerable time. Finally, it was answered, not by me but by officials of the department concerned. There was an impression in the mind of some people who had suggested the question that the information given in the official answer did not quite square with the facts. They wrote to the department concerned, the Department of National Health and Welfare. The assistant to the minister wrote to the person concerned giving the fact that the man concerned had received, not the \$100 which was asked about in the question, but in fact had received \$3,900. The man concerned worked at one time with the hon. member. Mr. Speaker, that is what I put on the record.

Now, if there was a misunderstanding, if there was misinformation, it was not on my part. I got information, partly as a result of the answer to my question and partly as a result of the answer given by an official of the department. Now, if the information was incorrect or if the information has been misinterpreted, if the information hurts the hon. member or the person who got the \$3,900, I am sorry. But I am not responsible for the information I get from the department. If the hon. member has a complaint it is against the department. If the person concerned gave the member wrong information or the member suggested to that person—as he told me on the telephone today, because I got in touch with him when he asked me to get in touch with him—if the member advised that person not to take the money while he was working with that member and the person took the money, then that is something between the person and the hon. member. But I do not have to take any responsibility for that, Mr. Speaker, and I do not. I gave the information precisely as I got it, no more and no less. I do not think I did anything wrong.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: This is not a debate. The hon. member for Ontario raised the question of privilege in the course of which he dealt with another hon. member to whom I have given an opportunity to make a contribution. Neither hon. member has asked the Chair to take any action resulting from the question of privilege. I do not see any other members who wish to make a contribution—

Mr. Lalonde: Mr. Speaker, on the same question of privilege. The hon. member made a reference to the effect that there was incorrect information being provided by my department. I wish to challenge that statement.—