

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, January 24, 1967

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

STATEMENT RESPECTING INCORRECT INFORMATION REGARDING MOTION FOR PAPERS

Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, January 12 the hon. member for Skeena raised a question of privilege in connection with notice of motion for the production of papers No. 191.

I have investigated the complaints made by the hon. member on that occasion and again yesterday, and I should like to apologize on behalf of the C.B.C. for the misunderstanding which led the hon. member to raise his question of privilege. The C.B.C. erroneously understood that the motion applied only to correspondence between the C.B.C. and other employers not associated with the corporation. This information was conveyed to the hon. member in perfectly good faith by my colleague the Associate Minister of National Defence on January 11. I regret the confusion this situation created.

As to the notice of motion for the production of papers, the C.B.C. has submitted that it has not been customary to require the corporation to produce such correspondence which is basically related to its detailed management and administration, and for that reason had not considered such correspondence was covered by the motion.

Since I have a ministerial responsibility to report for the C.B.C. I wish to express to the hon. member for Skeena and to the house my regrets for this inadvertent situation which has arisen.

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, that statement is quite acceptable, but I do not know whether the apology should be directed to me any more than to this house as a whole. However, I assume a responsibility now falls on me to do something with this motion which I moved on the basis of my earlier information. Before I do so perhaps we could get an indication as to whether the government intends to accept the original motion for the production of correspondence.

Miss LaMarsh: As I said, it appears that this involves a matter of internal management, and it has not been the custom in the past to produce such documentation.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member knows that he now has an opportunity to put the motion again, if he wishes to do so. Insofar as the question of privilege is concerned, in view of the explanation given by the minister it is obvious that there was no intent to mislead the house in any way. Therefore there is no prima facie case of privilege.

Mr. Howard: Perhaps I could raise another matter, Mr. Speaker. The situation being as it is, perhaps the notice of motion should automatically be restored to the order paper, since it was withdrawn as the result of a misunderstanding.

Mr. Speaker: I am afraid I cannot agree with the suggestion. The hon. member can very easily put this motion again on the order paper.

Mr. Howard: With all respect, Mr. Speaker, today is Tuesday and tomorrow is the next opportunity to put notices for papers on the order paper. This does not allow 48 hours in order that we can deal with this motion. In light of the comment by the hon. minister perhaps—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. gentleman's point is quite clear. Perhaps we can solve the problem in this way. With the unanimous consent of the house, and I am sure there will be no difficulty in this regard, the motion can be placed on the order paper without notice. Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

DIVORCE

SUBSTITUTION OF NEW PRINCIPLE FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. C-264, entitled Divorce Act 1967.

Some hon. Members: Explain.