

Supply

process allows for the appointment of a third party arbitrator mutually agreed to by both parties who can render a decision. That is the union way. That is labour law.

Mr. Benjamin: Mr. Speaker, it should never have gotten that far in the first instance. Just now in my speech, and last week, I pointed out that the Minister did nothing improper, and neither did his executive correspondence group. I read what the executive correspondence group was requesting. After that the issue should never have gone any further.

I remind the hon. gentleman that when one is facing a disciplinary hearing, one is faced with everything from being found innocent up to and including dismissal. That is what an employee is faced with when one is taken out of service, as the company called it. That is the same as a suspension. Up until the completion of the disciplinary hearing the employee faced everything from being rendered totally innocent to dismissal. That is what I said. I believe that if this matter had not been raised in Parliament, she would have been dismissed. I hope that I am wrong in thinking that. However, from what I know of the operations of some of these management types from a great many years of experience around here, that is why I feel that way.

I have made it perfectly plain and clear that this should never have got to the point of being a disciplinary action in the first place. That is when the Minister should have called Air Canada and should have said: "Whoa, this is a bad management decision. If you wish, call her in, get her side of the story, reprimand her or something like that, then that is fine". To go to these types of lengths—

An Hon. Member: What lengths?

Mr. Benjamin: She has been given a 30-day suspension as a result of the disciplinary hearing. The matter should never have gone that far in the first place.

● (1720)

Mr. Oberle: Mr. Speaker, it occurred to me that there is an inherent principle involved in the motion of which the Hon. Member spoke throughout his dissertation and it has to do with the violation of certain rights. According to the motion, in this particular case it is the right to freedom of speech. I wonder if it has occurred to members of the NDP that people in Canada also have a right to privacy.

The first exposure I had to this particular case occurred when I was watching television one night. I saw the airline stewardess being interviewed in the presence of the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent). The atmosphere was charged with emotion. The airline stewardess was all choked up. The interviewer explained how much this person had been hurt by public exposure of the incident. The Leader of the New Democratic Party, in a parental way, reached over and held the lady's hand and said: "You poor child, don't cry". They were all looking around to see who it was who had perpetrated this intrusion on this person's privacy. It had never

occurred to the lady who was interviewing the airline stewardess that she, the Leader of the NDP and the producers of the program were the ones who had organized public exposure of this minor incident. Now we have turned this House into a place where grievance procedures are heard.

I would like to ask the hon. gentleman if he has any feeling of remorse for having perpetrated this injustice on this lady. Is there some kind of reward handed out by the NDP or some kind of hall of fame for heroes who permit themselves to be exposed, lipstick, pantihose and all, in the House of Commons? Do members of the NDP think that they are doing a service to the country, the union movement and the collective bargaining process? If they do think that, I would like the Hon. Member to explain why.

Mr. Benjamin: Mr. Speaker, I was there in my Leader's office at the time and I want the hon. gentleman to know that it was that flight attendant's own wish to come here. She is not the kind of person who runs around yelling, screaming and hollering like the Hon. Member and me.

Mr. Oberle: Who phoned the CBC to say: "Let's get this lady out there, lipstick and all"?

Mr. Benjamin: She said she would be available to answer questions and as a courtesy, my Leader's office notified the media, and I am sure the Hon. Member's office would do the same thing.

I would like to tell all Hon. Members that for a total of 11 years, people in Saskatchewan have been afraid to speak, afraid to take part and afraid to express opinions because they work for the provincial Government. I can recall a Liberal Premier of Saskatchewan yelling that he was going to go after the Public Service and Crown corporation employees with a meat axe. Thousands of people were afraid to speak out when asked if they supported the Liberal Party, the Conservative Party or the NDP. When asked if they would like to put signs up on their lawns, they said: "Yes, but I don't dare". In fact, during the federal election campaign of 1984, I had to advise some provincial and federal civil servants not to put signs up for me or anyone else because they live under this kind of fear.

The action taken by Air Canada is the same kind of attack. It breeds fear and suspicion in the minds of its employees. It frightens them out of speaking out when they are entitled to speak out and denies them fundamental rights. That is what this all boils down to. I wish my hon. friends would see the point of the motion put by the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans). The point is that Air Canada has acted improperly and that is what this motion is trying to say.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Debate. The Hon. Member for Papineau (Mr. Ouellet).

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few brief comments in today's debate. My hon. colleague just said that Air Canada acted improperly.