

Oral Questions

example of this deficiency. That is a serious charge, made over a week ago, so I ask the minister if it is his intention to order a judicial inquiry into the circumstances surrounding this sinking.

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I need not say that I do not agree with the words quoted by the hon. member, however much I respect their source and his conveying them. I will say, however, that it is our intention to proceed with the recommendation for a judicial inquiry.

SINKING OF "WILLIAM CARSON"—COMPENSATION TO PASSENGERS AND CREW

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): A supplementary question. Is the minister prepared, on behalf of Canadian National, to tell the House if a decision has been made by the company with regard to compensation to the passengers and crew for the belongings they lost through that sinking?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately it is not possible to make a complete statement of the situation at this time. I understand the Canadian National is attempting to deal with individual passengers in relation to their personal belongings, but that some rather more complex questions arise in relation to freight and general cargo that involve legal claims and insurance liability. It may take a while to sort out these matters.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Davenport rises on a question of privilege.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

MR. CACCIA—PERMISSION TO APPEND COPIES OF LETTER TO *HANSARD*

Mr. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, last night, in a program entitled "Connections", reference was made to representations made by me on behalf of a young constituent of mine, an inmate of Millhaven penitentiary. This morning I went through my file on this young man. I have with me copies of letters I have written to the Solicitor General about this case since 1973. I am seeking, now, the permission of this House to have this correspondence printed and appended to today's *Hansard*. Mr. Speaker, I believe that by making these letters public, the record would be set straight.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. As much as the hon. member's suggestion is most worthy in support of the proposition he puts forward and in support of his quite legitimate representations on the matter, it is entirely a departure from our practice to extend to members, even with the consent of the House, the authority to table or append documents to *Hansard*. That authority rests with ministers, although not always even with them unless the matter falls within their administrative competence.

With respect, I very much fear that despite the very legitimate reasons for this particular request there would be a very

[Mr. McGrath.]

grave danger if—even with the consent of the House—a member was entitled to table or append documents to *Hansard*. Requests to do so would, naturally, increase considerably. I have to take this decision myself. Rather than putting that responsibility, which is a difficult one, upon the House, for I am sure in this particular circumstance no hon. member would want to withhold consent, and rather than putting that extension of our practice upon the House on this occasion, which would invite similar extensions to other members in the future, it seems to me I should, rather, invite the hon. member to make available copies of his correspondence which I am sure explains and supports his position.

We would be happy to arrange for distribution of these through the distribution system of the House of Commons as he desires, and to the press gallery and members of the press including, of course, the CBC which is involved. We will put at his disposal, as we would with any member, whatever services we have to make this distribution effective and immediate. I do not think, however, that I ought to put to the House the choice of extending our practices by appending this correspondence to *Hansard* or printing in *Hansard* as if it has been read.

MR. LAWRENCE—CBC PROGRAM ON ORGANIZED CRIME

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): Mr. Speaker, I rise, regretfully, on a question of privilege arising out of the very worth-while and well-intentioned CBC television exposé of internationally organized crime in Canada. I do so at this time mainly because of the reference to this matter by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Basford) and to certain purported remarks of mine as broadcast on that program. I rise regretfully because, as I have informed you, Mr. Speaker, I have attempted and am still attempting to get certain information from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation respecting the transcript or the full screening of the old interview they showed last night. I may say I think it is a question of privilege because to my mind it certainly damaged me personally and damaged my effectiveness in this House as a member of parliament. I therefore believe it is a matter of privilege for the House.

First of all, may I say that for all my adult political life I have attempted to fight and expose this human scum, this element in Canada of internationally organized crime, as much as if not more than most other hon. members, because in another jurisdiction I have had the opportunity to attempt to do exactly that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lawrence: I believe the minister's impression of what he heard last night is shared not only by members of the House but also by many people in this country. I am sure he believes he heard me say that there was no internationally organized crime in this country, in this province or indeed, in metropolitan Toronto. Of course, that is exactly opposite to the impression I attempted to give in the statement I made which was filmed in early 1972 by the CBC and other media in this