

Recruitment of Francophones

An hon. Member: That is just an argument.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Lang: The hon. member by a brief check with my office could in fact have found—

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the hon. member would agree that the Chair should listen to what the question of privilege is about. It is difficult for the Chair to determine whether there is a real question of privilege until there has been at least a brief statement to indicate what it is about. I suspect the point the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands wishes to make is that there is no question of privilege. This may well be, but I think I should at least briefly hear the minister.

Mr. Lang: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member for Gander-Twillingate—

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

Some hon. Members: Sit down!

Mr. Ricard: What is the question of privilege?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Chair has recognized the minister on a question of privilege. I will see the hon. member on his point of order in a moment.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member may ask a question if the minister who has the floor will allow a question.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am asking Your Honour if—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands might indicate whether he wishes to ask a question of the member who has the floor.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): No; I wanted to ask Your Honour if notice had been given to Your Honour of the question of privilege?

Mr. Speaker: I may say that no notice has been given to the Chair, but the Standing Order provides that when the question of privilege is one which arises out of debate in the House then no notice is required. It well may be that the question relates to the statement which has just been made, but I cannot judge that until I have heard the minister.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest that we proceed in an orderly fashion. The hon. member has raised a point of order. I think I have answered to the best of my

[Mr. Lang.]

ability the point raised by the hon. member. It seems to me we would make some progress in this matter if I were allowed to hear briefly what the minister has in mind. I may then be able to determine whether the minister should be allowed to continue.

Mr. Hees: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. In fairness to the minister I think he should be allowed to state his question.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege—

Mr. Speaker: Order. If the hon. member seeks the floor on a question of privilege I must then point out to him that there cannot be two questions of privilege at the same time. There is now one before the House. The minister has the floor.

Mr. Lang: I may say in passing that this sort of thing makes it obvious that it is necessary to examine Standing Order 43.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Sit down, professor.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The minister has the floor to state his question of privilege.

Mr. Lang: The hon. member for Gander-Twillingate has raised again a matter to which he referred in public last night, having already raised it in the House. In doing so he has reported hearsay when with the slightest bit of checking he could have found there was no such directive and that the situation simply is that information which is to be given by manpower managers is to be given in an orderly fashion under a directive which has existed since 1968.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I must interrupt the minister. Obviously he does not have a question of privilege. The minister has outlined his proposition. I have been as lenient as possible in allowing the minister to refer to what the question of privilege might be. Hon. members know what a question of privilege is. I have reminded the House very often of what in my view constitutes a question of privilege. I would not think that the hon. member personally or members generally have been affected in their right to discharge the business of the nation. I would think that the point raised by the hon. member is not akin to a question of privilege. I do think the matter should not be pursued.

Mr. Lang: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, but I was coming to my question of privilege which was the basis upon which—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I must rule, having heard the minister, that the point he seeks to raise relates to a statement which allegedly was made last night. It is necessary for me to rule that according to our Standing Orders the usual one-hour notice should have been given to the Chair. No such notice was given. If the minister will file notice, perhaps he will be given an opportunity to explain further what the question of privilege might be.