

*Privilege*

• (1410)

[English]

MR. COSSITT—WORDS USED BY SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO MINISTER OF TRANSPORT IN REFERRING TO MEMBER

**Mr. Tom Cossitt (Leeds):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege of which I have given prior notice to Your Honour. In this regard I would like to refer to page 5 of the *Ottawa Journal* of this date, Thursday, March 1, 1973. There appears on this page an article concerning an address made last night in Smiths Falls, Ontario, to the annual public meeting of the local Liberal association in that town by the special assistant to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand), Reverend Gervais Black. The headline of the article and the article itself quote the special assistant to the Minister of Transport as referring to me as a "purveyor of hatred."

He—

Referring to me.

—is developing a reputation now . . . throughout the country as . . . the number one purveyor of hatred—

**Some hon. Members:** Shame!

**Mr. Cossitt:** I take strong exception to such a statement which I believe goes beyond the bounds of all normal political criticism. I came to this House to represent the people of the good constituency of Leeds to the best of my ability and to do my best on behalf of my country as well.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cossitt:** I am not a purveyor of hatred and I consider that such a statement is slanderous and reprehensible.

**An hon. Member:** Sue him.

**Mr. Cossitt:** I ask that this matter be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections for a full investigation of all the circumstances surrounding it. I trust that the Minister of Transport will now rise in the House and immediately disown any connection with such statements alleged to have been made by a member of his staff.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, may I say that I fully realize that what I said about the Liberal party in the House on Monday last may have made them mad, but surely this goes beyond the bounds of normal political retaliation. This is a matter of privilege.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member gave somewhat late notice of his intention to raise this matter. He has referred to an article in a newspaper, which the Chair would like to read in due course. I think I should indicate to the hon. member that I have always had some doubts, based upon considerable precedents and jurisprudence, that statements made outside the House can be the basis of a question of privilege and of referral to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, although I think there are aspects of this case which are certainly worth looking into a little more closely. This the Chair will do on behalf of the House and of the hon. member.

[Mr. Speaker.]

**Mr. Nielsen:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the minister was about to rise, and in order to give him the opportunity to create a wholesome atmosphere in the House I think he should be permitted to reply.

MR. BROADBENT—CANADA-UNITED STATES AUTO PACT SAFEGUARDS—STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, TRADE AND COMMERCE

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege based on a statement made in the House yesterday by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Gillespie), at which time he misinformed the House concerning certain provisions in the Canada-United States automotive agreement. The minister is reported at page 1751 of yesterday's *Hansard* as referring to "the so-called safeguards" as being "transitional measures introduced at the start of the auto pact . . ."

The minister knows that in the Canada-U.S. automotive agreement of 1965 there were certain key provisions known as safeguards which, among other things, made it mandatory for automotive companies in Canada, in order to be eligible for certain tax remissions to do a certain percentage of production in Canada. These safeguards, Mr. Speaker, are not anywhere in the pact referred to as being transitional in nature. Indeed, they are embedded deeply in the core of the pact itself. Therefore, Sir, if you agree that this is a legitimate question of privilege and that the minister has misinformed the House I will move that this matter be referred immediately to the Standing Committee on Industry, Trade and Commerce.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby has filed with the Chair notice of his intention to bring this matter to the attention of the House under terms of Standing Order 17.

The hon. member claims that a statement made to the House yesterday by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce in reply to a question is incorrect and that it is his right to have the matter referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections or some other committee of the House as a breach of parliamentary privilege. I refer the hon. member to citation 113 of *Beauchesne*, Fourth Edition, which reads as follows:

Members often raise so-called "questions of privilege" on matters which should be dealt with as personal explanations or corrections, either in the debates or the proceedings of the House. A question of privilege ought rarely to come up in parliament.

And later in the same citation:

. . . a dispute arising between two members, as to allegations of facts, does not fulfil the conditions of parliamentary privilege.

The hon. member suggests or claims that the minister has misinformed the House. This in itself, even were it so and even if the information given by the minister were not correct, could not be the subject of a question of privilege for consideration by a committee.