

Committee Report

and I had nothing at all to do with its preparation. I trust the hon. member will have the courage to withdraw his accusation which I take as a serious personal insult if not a direct accusation.

[English]

Mr. Hawkes: Madam Speaker, I am at a disadvantage because I did not attend the meeting. I have seen the reports of the meeting and I attended previous meetings. I think there is a great deal of testimony from members of the committee which would indicate that procedures in that committee and the substance of this report are, in effect, being dictated by the government House leader. I would like the opportunity to examine the record and come back to the House on my question of privilege to put the evidence before the House.

[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, I wish to emphasize that the hon. member does not seem to have the courage to withdraw the completely unwarranted and unfounded accusation he has just made and that he is trying to hide behind the examination of I do not know what notes or the cross-examination of I do not know what hon. member. I insist that he should withdraw this false accusation, without any basis in fact, which he has just repeated by saying that I contributed directly or indirectly to the preparation of the report which has just been tabled. I categorically deny this accusation. I am certain that my word is at least as good as his and I am asking him to believe me and to withdraw the unfair accusation that he has made.

[English]

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, perhaps I could suggest a way out of this difficulty. I suggest to the hon. member who raised the question, for the purposes of deferring it, that he withdraw the current statement with respect to the alleged participation on the part of the government House leader until such time as he has read the report. Subsequently, he may present a question of privilege based on the alleged participation of the House leader and upon whatever evidence he may come up with at some later date. In the meantime, perhaps the hon. member would be disposed to withdraw any allegations at this time.

Mr. Hawkes: Madam Speaker, of course I accept the minister's word. This leads to another problem in that the committee report was drafted under a misunderstanding. The committee chairman may, in fact, wish to withdraw the report at a later date. I would like the question of privilege to be aired after I have had a chance to examine the public record.

[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, I do not see what there is to check as concerns my participation in the preparation of this report. However, to clarify what both the hon. member and the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) do not seem to understand, I would like to say that this committee wants an extension of its deadline and that it should make that request in the very near future.

Obviously, I was consulted about this matter. However, regardless of consultations about the extension of the deadline, which we would be willing to grant if there is no debate in the House, I must state that in no way did I take part in the preparation of any report, and if this can allay the fears of the hon. member, I am convinced that he will no longer want to accuse me of anything. However, I would like this to be clarified today. There is nothing else to verify.

[English]

Madam Speaker: I was somewhat confused myself when the hon. member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes) said he would check the records. That type of allegation would not be included in the records since obviously, if something happened, it was conversation which took place among a number of people. I am happy that the hon. member has offered to withdraw these allegations and to take the hon. minister's word, as he has stated in the House. I think when a motion for concurrence is moved the hon. member could raise his objection at that point. For the time being the report has been presented and I will consider it as such.

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PARLIAMENTARY EMPLOYEES COLLECTIVE BARGAINING ACT

MEASURE TO EXTEND PUBLIC SERVICE DEFINITION TO
PARLIAMENTARY EMPLOYEES

Mr. Mark Rose (Mission-Port Moody) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-621, to permit collective bargaining for employees of Parliament.

Some hon. Members: Explain.

Mr. Rose: Madam Speaker, the purpose of this bill is to implement an all-party unanimous recommendation from a special committee studying the Public Service Staff Relations Act in 1967.

All members know that, technically, House of Commons employees are not members of the public service. This bill extends the right now enjoyed by the public service to people who work for Parliament.

I think the rumours, events, and controversy of the last few weeks attest to the fact that we need much better procedures on all fronts in terms of dealing with human relations in the House of Commons, with such matters as pay scales, seniority, bargaining rights and the like. I believe this bill will go part way in solving some of these very difficult problems for staff members working here on the Hill, which I think in the main tries to be one of the best employers in Canada, if not the best.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.