

of both the country and this House of Commons have led to an understaffing of those Members.

The specific comment that I would like to bring to your attention with respect to the reasons I could not get a Private Members' Bill drafted until into the next session is as follows: "There are some Bills of priority that must be drafted first".

I submit that, when there is a judgment of priority and the question of what comes first, what comes into question then is which Member among Members should be the first to receive consideration. I submit that a consideration is taking place out of this Chamber as to the status and nature of some Members versus others; a judgment is being made as to which Member ought to receive priority. Any time, whether within or outside the House, that there is a priority decision given as to which Members are to be first, that jeopardizes those Members who must be something other than first.

When we, for whatever reason, have cause to bring to the attention of the House of Commons a piece of legislation in the interest of our constituents, our Province or our country, we should be able to do that without having to challenge whether or not we meet the priority of some other Member. If we have, as individual Members of the House of Commons, legislation that we want drafted and placed before the House, we should not have to wait until another session of Parliament, especially when that session could be several months from now. We want to be able to have our legislation at least receive the attention of the public by the fact that it receives first reading and, hopefully, is debated in this Chamber.

I have had a number of Bills. The nature of the Bills are not necessarily important, but I have a list here of six. I am sure that just by reading them Members would find in the main most of them are probably important and which to a large extent they may concur in. But the fact is that we cannot even get them drafted, and if the reason for it is that there are some Bills of priority that must be drafted first, then I submit that there is a judgment being made that affects the working operations of each and every Member in this Chamber. That, I suggest, constitutes a question of privilege.

Madam Speaker: I think the Hon. Member could have come to my office and discussed this problem because it is obviously a problem dealing with the manner in which the services of the House of Commons are provided to Members.

May I tell Hon. Members that I spend a lot of time trying to improve the services to Hon. Members because I know that those services are essential to the accomplishment of their tasks as Members of Parliament. I think Hon. Members will recognize that I have spent a lot of hours doing just that.

I would tell the Hon. Member that if he has been told that some Bills have priority over any of his Bills, I think I can explain to him what that really meant. Our policy is that Bills are drafted on the basis of first-come, first-served; so the first Members who came, I suppose, would be the ones who had priority.

Privilege—Mr. Hnatyshyn

There is no judgment made by any people in the law branch or by myself or anyone who has to deal with these problems as to which of the Bills are the most important ones. That is certainly not a judgment that is made. If he has been told that there were certain priorities, it is simply because other Members presented themselves before he did.

I have a notice of a question of Privilege by the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West (Mr. Hnatyshyn).

MR. HNATYSHYN—ALLEGED ATTACK ON CITIZENSHIP COURT

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): Madam Speaker, I did rise on a point of order, I do not know if you would want to hear me—a separate point of order—flowing from remarks of the Member for The Battlefords-Meadow Lake (Mr. Anguish) with respect to the admission he made as to the franking from my constituency of certain material, not under his signature but apparently under his auspices. I have the document in question and I would propose, with the unanimous consent of the House, to table these documents which are in the nature of a fund-raising opportunity and a membership application by an association involved with provincial legislation, not dealing with any responsibilities that we have in this Parliament.

I would ask, Madam Speaker, if I could obtain unanimous consent to table this material so it will be a matter of public record.

Madam Speaker: There are no precedents for that kind of tabling. The Hon. Member might make the documents available in another way, but there is no precedent for that kind of tabling.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: I wanted to ask for unanimous consent under Standing Order 42 of the rules of this House, which I think is available to us.

Mr. Nielsen: The House can do anything with consent.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: I certainly take your advice. I am quite prepared to—

Madam Speaker: The Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) is quite right: the House can do anything with unanimous consent. Does the House consent to the tabling of these documents?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

Madam Speaker: The Hon. Member does not have unanimous consent.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Madam Speaker, I want to rise on a question of privilege arising from matters in the Question Period today, in which I participated, relating to an unprecedented attack on the independence of a judicial body in our country, not only by a Member of the House of Commons but also by a Member of the Cabinet—and I refer to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Caccia).