

Petitions

member for Saskatoon-Biggar, because it is very difficult to differentiate between what he is advancing and what is advanced by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton—is something that is permitted to all members of this House, including members of the treasury benches, namely, to correct a reply that has been provided where the information given to the House was inaccurate.

My right to do so was even more enhanced by the fact that there had been misinterpretation by the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council in the reply he provided to the House.

In order to speed up the process of replies given in the House, especially when questions are asked of all government departments relating to certain information, it has been the custom of the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council to gather the replies from the various departments and compile them in a form which is intelligible. This is the first time, in my memory—and I occupied that position for 18 months—that such an error has been committed. It created some impact in my department because the information in the misinterpretation was detrimental to personnel in my department. As the hon. member knows, it is not only my right, but my duty, to correct any misinformation or misinterpretation provided to this House.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I am sorry that the Postmaster General has taken occasion to impute a motive that somehow the point I was raising was other than proper, suggesting the only reason I rose was because I was trying to get publicity for a particular position before the television cameras. I know the disability—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Surely the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar is not going to suggest that every time somebody accuses another member of seeking publicity or wasting the time of the House, I am going to recognize it as a question of privilege. If that is the argument that is going to be put forward, it is asking me to take a course of action that would be extremely drastic to both sides of the House.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: The minister went on to suggest that I somehow went on to mislead the House.

Mr. Blais: I never said that at all.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Your Honour knows that we are involved in a debate on the question of interpretation of questions and answers. It is a matter of interpretation—nothing more, and nothing less. The Postmaster General is attempting, by this procedure, to bring in the treasury benches truth squad with respect to whether answers are, in fact, accurately reported or whether there are nuances. Are we to continue with this kind of correction, at the expense of the time of the House of Commons, with the Postmaster General getting up every day and saying that an interpretation was not correct?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

[Mr. Blais.]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Yvon Pinard (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Speaker: Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S.O. 26

[English]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

LAY-OFFS AT INCO PLANTS

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): As you know, Mr. Speaker, because I have given you the required notice, I intend asking for leave to introduce a motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 26. Before doing so, may I emphasize that a similar motion, under a similar rule, was accepted this morning by the Speaker of the Ontario legislature. I think I am forbidden by the rules to indicate anything more than the fact that I intend to ask for leave to move the adjournment of the House under the terms of Standing Order 26.

I do so in view of the very real emergency that exists and will continue to exist over the next few months in the economies of northern Ontario, the Niagara region of Ontario and northern Manitoba, among others, because of the ruthless and unexpected decision by the INCO metals company drastically to cut back production and mining operations in Canada, resulting in the loss of between 3,500 and 4,000 jobs in Sudbury, Ontario—a place Your Honour is well acquainted with—Thompson, Manitoba, and Port Colborne, Ontario.

I do so, sir, because I firmly believe that this House should have the opportunity to consider immediate, urgent remedial action which really can only be discussed in a sensible and meaningful way in a special debate of this nature.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Having given the required notice, the hon. member has conformed with the requirements of Standing Order 26. The hon. member asks that the debate be set aside in order to give immediate and urgent attention to this problem. The hon. member is quite right; it is obvious, as the hon. member for Sudbury, that I am, personally, deeply affected and deeply aware of the gravity of this problem, for it touches my community more severely than any other community in the country.

● (1232)

The application has been recited by the hon. member in terms of the Standing Order, and I have no hesitation in