

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member for Yukon on a question of privilege.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I do not take lightly any application by the hon. Leader of the Opposition to put a question. However, my hands are tied. The question period was to adjourn at three-ten o'clock. If I were to recognize the hon. Leader of the Opposition for a supplementary question now, I think I would be extending the question period too long. I am afraid my hands are tied.

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### PRIVILEGE

MR. NIELSEN—OMISSION IN OFFICIAL REPORT

**Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon):** Mr. Speaker, I have a very serious question of privilege to raise. It involves the Minister of Transport and Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang), so I hope he stays with us. My question of privilege has to do with a deletion in *Hansard* of a most gross nature. Throughout my comments, I want the minister involved to understand that I am not making any allegations that he made the deletion, because there is a possible second explanation.

To present the problem to Your Honour, I might refer to page 402 of *Hansard* of yesterday's date. At the top of the page, the Minister of Transport and Minister of Justice was answering questions put to him by the hon. member for Perth-Wilmot (Mr. Jarvis). The first full paragraph at the top of the page reads as follows:

I shall not engage in theoretical discussion about whether or not at some point we might get into some kind of confrontation. I do not foresee it. I foresee our making statements to the commission when the commission wants advice on issues of confidentiality.

It is at that point that the deletion has occurred. *Hansard* goes on to read:

As I see it, that approach has worked well up to this point.

Then it continues. I have examined the blues. I am not aware at this point whether the minister examined the blues personally yesterday. As we all know, the personal aides to ministers sometimes exercise that responsibility. At page K-2 of the blues, toward the bottom of the page—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I wonder whether the hon. member would want to consider putting his point in a different form. We are into a rather serious departure here by making reference to what are essentially galley proofs before the final print is made. Obviously there is no difficulty at all in any member indicating, having been in the House yesterday, or having in some way brought to his attention, that he recollects remarks by a minister which do not appear in *Hansard*. I think that is a perfectly proper way to put it. I am not sure that we ought to depart from our past practice and introduce into the record of the House what are essentially galley proofs for the purpose of the final edition of *Hansard*. I can understand, if a

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dispute were to arise, that they might be referred to, but I do not think that we ought to introduce them at this stage.

I have no objection to the hon. member saying, as I think he is developing, that it is his recollection that words were used by the minister which do not appear in *Hansard*. That may have been an editorial fault on the part of *Hansard*, or someone may have moved to delete them. But I am not sure, at this stage, that reference ought to be made to what are essentially preparatory copies to the final edition of *Hansard*.

**Mr. Nielsen:** I will certainly abide by your directions, sir. If you will tolerate my development of the circumstances, I think you may well come to the conclusion that the integrity of the electronic system in this place may be an explanation for the deletion. So I am afraid I must make such reference because of that fact.

At the foot of page K-2, the last word is "confidentiality". That is the last word in the printed *Hansard*. At page K-3, it goes on as follows:

As I see it, that approach has worked well up to this point.

So much for the blues. But there was a whole phrase which was said by the minister yesterday that has been omitted. The Chief of *Hansard* has explained that it was a recording error, very unusual for this to happen, but nonetheless it happened. This is what the minister said. If he or you, Mr. Speaker, wish to listen to a tape of it, I have it on tape. I did not make the tape; it was provided to me. As you know well, sir, members of the press gallery are privileged to make tapes of our proceedings. What was actually said, taking it up with the word "theoretical"—the minister also said "hypothetical", but that was deleted and I take no quarrel with that—was:

—about whether or not at some point we might get into some kind of confrontation. I do not foresee it.

So far, so good. The quote continues:

I foresee us making submissions to the commission when the commission needs advice or wants advice on issues as to confidentiality.

Here is the deleted part:

The decision will then be taken by the commission, and as far as I am concerned, what has worked well up to this—

And then the minister goes on. Those were the precise words which were said by the minister. I suggest to you, Sir, that the omission of those words very emphatically changes the whole sense of the minister's answer as recorded in *Hansard*, and indeed eliminates entirely one of the most important elements of that answer.

The words I speak of as being so important and which have been omitted are: "The decision will then be taken by the commission". There is no doubt that the minister uttered those words. He may even recollect them. It may well be that the minister or his aides had nothing to do with eliminating this from *Hansard*. That seems to me to be the probable, logical conclusion. But obviously there has been either a failure of the recording equipment in this age of electronic miracles in this place, or there may be other explanations. I prefer to believe the latter.