

Transport and Communications

with the Minister of Finance to take whatever action he deems to be equitable in the circumstances.

This question is causing considerable concern because of the size of the fee and the relevance it might have to telephone rates in British Columbia. While I am all for seeing the powers of committees preserved and, if possible, extended, I have grave doubts as to the relevance of this recommendation. We are dealing here with a delicate matter related to the responsibilities placed upon some of the officers of the House in connection with fees of this type.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I rise, really, just for the purpose of asking whether the provision set out in Standing Order 99—

Mr. Graftey: You just couldn't keep out of it, could you, Stanley?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):—have been carried out with respect to this bill. Standing Order 99 reads as follows:

No motion for the suspension or modification of any provision of the standing orders applying to private bills or to petitions for private bills shall be entertained by the House until reference has been made to the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Private Bills and Standing Orders...

And so on. It seems to me if that reference were made, then, of course, the committee could report thereon. If that reference were not made, it would seem to me that the committee does not have the right to report thereon but that a request would have to be made for that reference.

● (1430)

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Lotbinière on a point of order.

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I will keep my comments to myself since the chairman of the transport committee is aware of my views. I have no comment to make now.

However, I wish to point out on behalf of my fellow Social Crediters that an unfortunate situation has now occurred. Today is an opposition day allotted to our group for the consideration of subsidies. It is our only opposition day before the holidays and since the beginning of this Parliament, and already 20 or 25 minutes have gone by, the question period has not yet started and the orders of the day are not yet completed.

Mr. Speaker, in connection with the point of order, I wish to convey our regrets and ask the Privy Council to try to plan better its agenda, so that when it asks the co-operation of members for the passage of government measures we may be in a position to co-operate. On the other hand, it should also co-operate with us when it comes to allotted opposition days.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order. I thank hon. members for their valuable contributions to the question, and as I have indicated will be delivering my ruling and the reasons therefor probably tomorrow.

[Mr. MacKay.]

MANPOWER

SUGGESTED INQUIRY OF ALLEGED POLITICAL INTERFERENCE WITH LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM—
REQUEST FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO MOVE MOTION

Mr. Tom Cossitt (Leeds): Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask permission of the House to move a motion of urgent and pressing necessity with regard to the Local Initiatives Program and to copies of additional government documents which I would be prepared to table today. I ask permission to move, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. McKenzie):

In view of copies of further government documents now available today, including ones signed by D. C. Trehearne, R. J. Cairns, Robert K. Andras and others, showing evidence of political interference and manipulation with the Local Initiatives Program as illustrated by project numbered X1074 in the constituency of Capilano in the province of British Columbia, the House requests a full and independent inquiry by a royal commission to determine the extent of political scandal in the handling of the Local Initiatives Program.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The House has heard the terms of the motion. Because of the reference in the terms of the motion to documents which have become available this day, there would be some element of immediacy to it which did not exist hitherto. However, the motion being proposed pursuant to Standing Order 43 it requires unanimous consent before it can be debated. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Cossitt: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I should like to ask whether I have the permission of the House to table these documents. Surely, the government is not afraid. If it has nothing to hide and there is no scandal, why will the government not agree to my tabling the documents?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member knows there is no provision in the rules for a private member to table or file documents in any way. However, the hon. member, having the documents in his possession, presumably can make them public in a number of other ways.

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SENATE AND HOUSE OF COMMONS ACT

AMENDMENT TO PROVIDE FOR MEMBERSHIP OF
INDEPENDENT MEMBERS ON COMMITTEES

Mr. Leonard C. Jones (Moncton) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-368, to amend the Senate and House of Commons Act (independent members of the House of Commons).

Some hon. Members: Explain.

Mr. Jones: Mr. Speaker, the Speaker of the House of Commons can always be relied upon to uphold the rights of minorities in this House. To this I might add that Your Honour, as Speaker, and your staff have been of tremendous assistance to myself as an independent member. Truly, you have been like a godfather, very co-operative.