

Privilege—Mr. Reynolds

contacted me and who seemed to believe that an opposition MP would have full and useful knowledge of a pipeline route 20 months before a decision was due to be made.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Reynolds: Mr. Speaker, I think the House should know how this libellous concoction was put together. First, I was approached for an interview about the subcommittee on penitentiaries by Dubro and MacAdam. If I looked surprised when asked about Joe Gentile, it was because the interviewer suddenly started asking about a topic that did not arise out of anything previously discussed. In the program my answers were rearranged to convey as damaging an impression as possible.

On realizing, after the interview—which took place at my home—the nature of the hatchet job which was being prepared, I went to my next meeting with Mr. Jim Dubro and Mr. Bill MacAdam, the producer, at a Toronto hotel with my lawyer in attendance. This meeting was held on June 9 at the Chelsea Inn and had been agreed to at the time of our first interview. We discussed a number of points which I felt showed a lot of the CBC information to be erroneous and slanted for the benefit of some of those who would like to see my career and reputation ruined.

It was quite obvious to the CBC people that the reason my lawyer was there was to ensure I had every opportunity to make sure my point of view was heard, and also that if the program on the weekend was to include this erroneous information, we would seek an injunction in a court of law, as would have been my legal right. We were assured, Mr. Speaker, by these two gentlemen that the weekend program had nothing to do with me and in fact they had arranged a meeting tentatively for today so that we could follow up this story even further.

● (1510)

By lying to me in such a facile manner, the CBC deprived me of my legal right to challenge their intention to air the segments slandering me. I believe this was a despicable and dishonourable way for the CBC to act—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Reynolds: —and I intend to take legal action. My lawyer in Vancouver, Mr. Allan McEachern—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Reynolds: —has already served a writ today. To clarify matters, Mr. Speaker, he is no relation of my hon. friend on the other side. To any who may wonder why no legal action was taken until today, I would draw their attention to the British Columbia libel and slander act which suggests that one clear day after the offence should lapse before commencement of any action.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this program impugns my integrity as a member of parliament and is entirely within the

[Mr. Reynolds.]

ambit of privilege as defined by Beauchesne, particularly citations 110 and 111(h). However, I also know that British practice tends to hold that a remedy through the courts should be sought if one is available, and I believe that is the most appropriate course of action in this case. Therefore, I will not move a motion but I will see the gentlemen from the CBC in court.

Everyone here believes in freedom of the press, Mr. Speaker, but surely that is defined as the right to publicize or broadcast the truth. By that definition, the CBC's presentation was a hypocritical and untruthful exercise in character assassination. I will not stand for it, and neither would any other member of this House. I hope the CBC pays as much attention to the proceedings in court and to this statement as it has to its own libellous fabrications.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. That being what I presume, from my own rough count, is the last contribution to this fascinating subject, I would now propose to carry this matter under study for a few days, probably until Monday or Tuesday, before attempting to make a final pronouncement on it.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

First report of Standing Committee on Public Accounts—Mr. Lawrence.

[English]

Third report of Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration—Miss Nicholson.

[Editor's Note: For text of above reports, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]

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REPRESENTATION ACT, 1977

MEASURE RESPECTING REPRESENTATION IN HOUSE OF COMMONS

Mr. Gordon Towers (Red Deer) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-424, respecting representation in the House of Commons.

Some hon. Members: Explain.

Mr. Towers: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill is to maintain membership in the House of Commons at approximately its present level until the population of Canada exceeds 50 million. At present, the base figure for Quebec of 75