

*Privilege—Mr. Symes*

alters the interpretation I had and indeed that the public had yesterday—that the minister had given assurances that there would be amendments to the Students Loans Act providing a student would not have to repay until he gained full employment.

The official transcript of yesterday says the minister will explore the matter—a quite contradictory interpretation of what we heard yesterday. I should like to know how that *Hansard* record was altered in such a way as to contradict clearly the answer of yesterday. I would also hope that the minister would explain what is the government's actual position on repayment of student loans?

**Hon. John Roberts (Secretary of State):** Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to thank the hon. member for having indicated to me that he intended to raise this question of privilege. That was a kind thing for him to do and I appreciate it.

I can explain it quite simply that the words were added to try to make clear what was, in fact, the situation. As the hon. member knows, we have had some discussions about the legislation, and to have left the impression that I had given the assurance to him that the change which he wanted to see in the legislation would in fact be presented, would not have been true. That was not in fact the substance of our conversation and it did not seem to me desirable to have the public record misstate the facts of the situation.

I admit, Mr. Speaker, that there is not a right to contravene the sense of the answer and that was not my intention in adding those words to make the response clearer. It would have been the essence of his question, or the part that stuck in my mind was his desire that we take these issues seriously, and that was the assurance which I wished to give him and which I give to him still.

I would therefore welcome the opportunity that he has presented if there have been—he has told me this privately—some press reports which indicated that the legislation would contain the provision for a six-month delay of the re-collection of loans until after the point when the former student was employed. It enables me to indicate that that had not been the intention of the proposed legislation, but I indicated to him that I would explore this possibility. Since such a change would indeed take place in regulations and not in legislation itself, I would hope that he would not let that lacuna—that vacuum in the legislation from his point of view—impede the passage of legislation which I believe is of very considerable significance to the students of the country and would assist them greatly.

On the other matter which I also promised to explore, that of the situation or the position of the provinces in relation to grants, I have been assured after telephone consultations that it is not the intention of the provinces to make any changes in the ratio of grants to loans. There may be some provinces which will want to make changes in relation to grants vis-à-vis their own bursaries. That undertaking has been made to me as a result of telephone conversations. I hope that meets one of the concerns of the hon. member and that he and his col-

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leagues in the New Democratic Party will therefore be prepared to give speedy treatment to this legislation when it is presented to the House.

● (1212)

**Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, this raises a very important question. I think the minister by his answer indicated he changed the purport of the transcript. If that practice continued, the debates in the House can become meaningless and irrelevant. They can change from day to day, overnight, and outside the House. The minister knows there is a procedure available to him to rise on a question of privilege and indicate that he inadvertently misled the House or did not give a complete answer, and that would be accepted with applause by all members.

Further, and I say this as kindly as I can, this statement has come from a minister who, in terms of his estimates, indicated that there was some difficulty for some period of time. I followed his answer with interest, and I would like to reserve the right to raise the matter later if that should appear to be necessary.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Hon. members have touched upon a point which concerns my authority in respect of the faithful recording of the proceedings of the House. I will discuss it, of course, with the Editors of *Hansard* to determine what in fact has taken place. It is a matter of great and substantial importance to the accuracy of the record of the proceedings.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### NORTHERN GAS PIPELINE

**Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the first report of the Special Committee on a Northern Gas Pipeline.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### FINANCE

**Mr. Bob Kaplan (York Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the Second Report of the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs dealing with Bill C-18, an Act to amend the Anti-Inflation Act.

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