

the Privy Council (Mr. Smith). The Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain has offered the distinguished spokesman for the Government a solution. To believe for one moment that these Bills are not already prepared and quite capable of distribution within the next ten minutes is quite unthinkable to me. If, in fact, that were to be the case, then the distinguished Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Smith) has an onus to satisfy Members of this Parliament through whatever other actions he deems necessary in achieving the purposes of the agreement which was reached in the House earlier.

I simply repeat to the Hon. Member that if he suggests to the House that this draft Bill—I will cede that point at this time—is not already in printed form adequate for distribution not only to Members of this Chamber but throughout the usual distribution system which involves 4,000 or 5,000 copies, then everything that was said earlier today by the Minister of Justice (Mr. MacGuigan) and the Government House Leader (Mr. Pinard) becomes somewhat of a sham.

I can only appeal to the commonsense of the Parliamentary Secretary in the hope that we can resolve this within the next very few minutes and be able to give a response to the Government before the day is over.

Mr. Smith: As Members opposite know, I am a very reasonable chap. The Minister of Justice is a very reasonable chap. I suspect that if the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West had gone to the office of the Minister of Justice and asked for copies of the Bill that he indicated would be available, he may well have received them. I do not know whether he has done that. I do not happen to have copies of the Bill. Of course, I can make inquiries. I do not have copies here. It is not up to me to usurp responsibilities of the Minister of Justice.

With respect to giving a direction to those who operate the reproduction facilities in the House, that is something that falls under the jurisdiction of the Speaker or the Management Services Branch. Certainly it is not a matter in which I can issue instructions.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: You are the Acting Government House Leader.

Mr. Smith: I can make inquiries on his behalf. Perhaps we can resolve the matter. Had the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West gone to see the Minister of Justice, I suspect that he would not need to rise in the House on this point.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: I am talking to the Acting Government House Leader.

Mrs. Ursula Appolloni (York South-Weston): Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to enter into the debate but I have no idea what is in that document. I would caution all Members therefore that we should be careful about widely distributing copies of it in case it is not already in both official languages. If it were in one language only, I could envision perhaps some discriminatory practice against some Members, particularly on this side of the House.

Point of Order—Mr. Hnatyshyn

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, I hope I am not revealing too much of what is in the copy which I have when I tell the Hon. Member that it is in both official languages. It is printed as a Bill ready for introduction.

I thought that the proper and courteous way of proceeding was to deal with the Government House Leader, who has responsibility with respect to the distribution of Government legislation and proposed Government legislation. I meant no discourtesy to the Acting House Leader by asking him the question; I asked because it is his responsibility. I agree with the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain, I do not want to waste the time of the House; I just want to get it distributed and dealt with. I do not want to waste any more time of the House.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West): Mr. Speaker, what the hell is going on here with all this phoney jockeying around between the Government and the Official Opposition? The Bill is available but apparently there are not enough copies.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: I cannot get any copies.

Mr. Benjamin: We are prepared to give unanimous consent for the House to revert to motions so that the Government can present this Bill for first reading. Even if the Government is not satisfied with the contents of the Bill, it can always leave it to die on the Order Paper. The Official Opposition can then be put on the spot about unanimous consent for first reading. I am beginning to wonder if either one of them wants it dealt with quickly. First reading can be dealt with right now with everyone getting a copy of the Bill.

Mr. Douglas Fisher (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, having heard Question Period and the subsequent debate today, I simply want to make the observation that it appears to me that the Minister of Justice (Mr. MacGuigan) went to the Member for Saskatoon West (Mr. Hnatyshyn) because of his known expertise and concern in this matter. That seems to me to be a laudable gesture. It is a process which I think we would want to encourage, that we should go to other Members, in an informal way, to ask those Members who have a known conscience and ability for their preliminary input.

Let us make it clear that what is binding on the Member at this time is his promise to the Minister of Justice that he would keep this Bill on a confidential basis. He made that promise of his own free will to the Minister of Justice. The Minister of Justice recognized that promise because of the previous stature and reputation of the Hon. Member.

I believe that the Members in the New Democratic Party have made a good point. A valuable process has been initiated by the Minister of Justice and he has received co-operation from the Member for Saskatoon West. This process of consultation before the introduction of a Bill to Parliament is very valuable. However, I suggest that the debate which is ensuing here is beginning to threaten that kind of co-operation. On a personal note, I must ask the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West why he feels he wants to threaten such a valuable process