

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, September 27, 1971

The House met at 2 p.m.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT BILL—ISSUANCE OF REVISED NOTICE PAPER CONTAINING PROPOSED REPORT STAGE AMENDMENTS

Mr. Speaker: On Friday last the hon. member for Annapolis Valley filed, in the usual manner and before the prescribed hour, a notice of motion to amend Bill C-262, an act to support employment in Canada by mitigating the disruptive effect on Canadian industry of the imposition of foreign import surtaxes or other actions of a like effect. Inadvertently, that notice of motion was omitted from today's order paper.

As hon. members will notice, a revised notice paper in regard to this bill has been prepared and placed on all desks. I wish to apologize to the hon. member for Annapolis Valley. I can assure him it is my hope that the action that has now been taken will repair any difficulty which may have resulted from this inadvertent omission of his notice.

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PRIVILEGE

MR. CAFIK—STATEMENTS MADE BY MEMBER FOR YORK SOUTH

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. member for Ontario rising on a question of privilege?

Mr. Norman A. Cafik (Ontario): Yes, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Standing Order 17 I rise on a question of privilege. Notice of this question was given to you last Friday morning to fulfil the conditions of Standing Order 17(2).

My question of privilege relates to statements made on Thursday in the House of Commons by the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis). I realize, Mr. Speaker, that such a question must be raised at the first available opportunity. At the time these statements were made in the House I had left the chamber for a brief period to attend an important meeting in the government lobby to discuss possible lay-offs in the automobile industry, which is a matter of deep concern to myself and to the people I represent. Consequently it was impossible to raise my objection at that time. Last Friday the hon. member for York South was not present in the chamber, and as my question related to his statements I felt that the honourable thing to do was to ask for a deferment.

The hon. member for York South is reported in *Hansard* at page 8106 as having said:

—because it has those rows of men who are governed by their

loyalty to a party and to the bagman of the party rather than any loyalty of conscience.

Such a statement is clearly unparliamentary, untrue and highly insulting, and as such should be withdrawn and an appropriate apology given.

A question of privilege was raised at the time by the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (Mr. Allmand). However, in his response the hon. member for York South said: "I was not talking in general about hon. members opposite supporting the government". But this implies, Mr. Speaker, that in this specific case he still meant what he said. I find this kind of explanation unacceptable.

Equally important is the fact that such intemperate outbursts degrade the House to a level which I think all of us would find far too low. Such a statement would be more understandable if it came from an inexperienced parliamentarian in the early part of his career as opposed to an experienced parliamentarian in the latter part of his career.

I cite May's 17th edition, page 448, which says in part:

A member, while speaking to a question, may not introduce matter which is irrelevant to that question . . . speak offensive and insulting words . . . make personal allusions to Members of Parliament—

His statements are irrelevant, offensive, insulting, certainly constitute personal allegations in respect of Members of Parliament, and on these counts alone I respectfully submit they should be withdrawn.

● (2:10 p.m.)

In Beauchesne's Fourth Edition, citation 134 further states that members are not permitted to impute to any member or members unworthy motives for their action in a particular case. In my view, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's statement clearly imputes motives of the highest possible kind in the lowest possible way to Members of Parliament which I feel, in justice, should not even be made in the streets, never mind in the House of Commons.

Further, in Bourinot's Fourth Edition at page 363 it is made clear that one cannot say or state that any member of the House of Commons is a servile servant of the government itself, a point which is implied in the statement of the hon. member for York South. As an individual Member of Parliament I am sure that all other members of this House consider our first obligation and primary loyalty is to our own consciences, and I believe we are entitled to an apology.

The second point I wish to raise, Mr. Speaker, stems from a statement in that same speech as recorded on page 8107 of Thursday's *Hansard*, in which the hon. member said:

They are guilty also of blackmail—

Later he repeated this allegation when he said:

—I say that that is clear blackmail which is unworthy of any government—