

*Privilege—Mr. Speyer*

This morning I learned that the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Gray) would not be in the House today. There are 500,000 Canadians who are employed either directly or indirectly in the textile and clothing industry. Over 2,500 of them are employed in my riding. As a result of this, I phoned the minister's office and made his assistant, Mr. Kerr, aware of the fact that I was going to pose a question with respect to when the government's position with respect to the report would be made available to the people of Canada. Second, I was going to ask a question with respect to the government's position on this important matter. As a result of that, I specifically told Mr. Kerr of the minister's office exactly what my questions would be. I asked him to notify the acting minister, so that he would not be caught unawares. I see many ministers in the House tonight. I say that I wanted to honour a tradition in this House, it being that you should give notice to a minister, who is an acting minister, so that he may be made aware of the nature of the inquiries you intend to pose.

This afternoon it transpired that when I tried to be recognized—and you know from your list, Madam Speaker, that I tried both on Friday and today—I was pre-empted in my question by the hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Pelletier) who asked precisely the question that I was about to ask and of which I had given notice to the minister.

**Some hon. Members:** Shame!

**Mr. Speyer:** As I said, there are certain traditions that are honoured in order that this House functions. There are certain confidentialities that ought to have been honoured. My assertion to you, Madam Speaker, and the basis upon which I bring my question of privilege, is that my statement to Mr. Kerr this afternoon stating precisely what my questions to the minister would be, was repeated to the hon. member for Sherbrooke, whereupon he pre-empted me, although I had notified the government of the questions I would be posing this afternoon.

I say to you, Madam Speaker, if we do call members "honourable members", where is the honour when a minister or a member of his staff advises another member of the government where he can pre-empt the person who gave notice? Is there no shame on the other side when notice of a question is given and someone asks another member to ask the question, thereby pre-empting us? In my respectful submission there is an implied breach of confidence, Your Honour. There is a breach of tradition. I suggest to you that if you find a prima facie case on this important matter, I will put forward the appropriate motion.

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

**Madam Speaker:** I have referred to my list for this afternoon, because I was wondering if, in fact, the hon. member had not asked a question. I see that his name has not been crossed out on my list. I distinctly remember that I put his name on the list quite early in the question period and then he left the House. I came to him and I looked—

**Mr. Speyer:** That was after.

**Madam Speaker:** I looked at the hon. member's seat, since his turn had come, according to my list, and he was not in the House. After that it was too late. I had gone on to other hon. members. That is why he was not recognized. At any rate, that is not important. I am just giving the hon. member an explanation because I did wonder whether he did have a chance to ask a question this afternoon. I can see from my list that he did not. I try to go from one side of the House to the other during the question period. At any rate, I cannot see where there is a question of privilege that I can judge. If a minister or other member tipped off another member about a question that the hon. member for Cambridge thought he would ask, it is not a matter that the Chair can rule upon. I do not know ahead of time what the question will be. The hon. member will have noted that I recognized a Liberal member at about the same point I usually do. That member happened to be the hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Pelletier). I remember that quite distinctly.

There is no question of privilege in the hon. member's question this evening.

The hon. member for Leeds-Grenville (Mr. Cossitt).

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**POINT OF ORDER**

MR. COSSITT—UNPARLIAMENTARY REMARK BY AN HON. MEMBER

**Mr. Tom Cossitt (Leeds-Grenville):** Madam Speaker, I would like to raise a point of order. This is the first opportunity I have had to do so since the matter occurred last Friday. In doing so I would like to refer to page 8711 of *Hansard* for March 27, 1981. At that time I raised the point that a member of this House had referred to the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton (Mr. Baker) as a "simple-minded hypocrite." At that time I said that this was unparliamentary language and the Chair agreed that it was, indeed, unparliamentary language. I then said further:

I am asking for clarification from the Chair. Would Madam Speaker be prepared to consult *Hansard* to see whether those words were picked up? If they were, Madam Speaker would have to hear my point of order. Is Madam Speaker prepared to do that?

MADAM SPEAKER: Yes, I am prepared to do that.

● (2150)

When I consult *Hansard*, page 8709, for last Friday, I find the words:

AN HON. MEMBER: You are a simple-minded hypocrite.

This interrupted the remarks by the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton. Therefore, I obviously contend that unparliamentary language was used at that time. I drew the attention of the House to the fact that it was a very honourable remark from this end of the Chamber. I am sure that it was very honourable to *Hansard* because they have recorded it.

**An hon. Member:** A member of the NDP made it.