

exchanged, that the project was not approved in a legitimate and approved manner, or that the hon. member received any benefit. That is the only issue to which I can refer member about the references that were in the public press today.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

It seems to me that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources is agreeing that it would appear now that Senator Cogger did lobby the hon. member for Châteauguay to lobby on behalf of the firm—

Some Hon. Members: Order!

Mr. Speaker: Given what I have said, and concerning myself particularly with respect to that question regarding the privilege of a member of this place, I am going to rule that question out at this time.

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MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Southeast): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. In light of last night's three statements by party leaders on the Meech Lake Accord, does the Prime Minister expect further developments before next week's First Ministers' Conference in Ottawa?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Opposition expresses surprise when a question that goes to the heart of the well-being of the nation is raised.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: It is 2.57 p.m., and this is the most important question that has been raised here today. I commend the member for raising it.

I want to commend the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the NDP for what I thought, if I may say so, were excellent speeches last evening defending the Meech Lake Accord, which is so important.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: If I may say so, mine was pretty good too.

Oral Questions

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: I have had conversations and meetings with premiers. We hope to have a productive conference next week when the first ministers arrive. It is a conference on the economy. But there will be, as often is the case, constitutional matters discussed. We hope to work our way through some of the obstacles that presently exist.

My hon. friend asked if there was anything new. One thing that is new is a statement that appeared in this morning's *Le Devoir* by Mr. Chrétien, which states:

[Translation]

Still in favour of granting Quebec a right of veto on constitutional amendments, as proposed by the former Trudeau Government, he sees no reason why this should be extended to every province.

He said, and I quote:

I am not convinced that Prince Edward Island should be granted a right of veto.

There,

[English]

That is a very important statement by Mr. Chrétien, Mr. Speaker. He proposes, it would appear, to erect a two-tier kind of country where Quebec gets a veto, but Newfoundland does not; where Ontario gets a veto, but Manitoba does not. This is unacceptable. This is what the Meech Lake Accord was designed to correct.

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ARTS AND CULTURE

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, like most nations' capital cities around the world which take pride and showcase their national cultural treasures, so too do we here in Ottawa through our museums of Civilization, Natural Science, Science and Technology, as well as the National Gallery and the National Arts Centre.

The Minister of Communications is accountable for, through this House, and in the name of Canadians, the well-being of these national treasures. Will the minister state here and now that he will respect the national mandate and ensure the survival of the National Arts Centre for all Canadians as a national showcase for dance.