

necessary. But certainly, I do not think that members should be condemned for acting on the suggestion of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, which informed members that while they were not entitled to any fees they were entitled to out of pocket expenses. If members have accepted those out of pocket expenses they have done so on the recommendation of the C.B.C. and with the distinct understanding that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation had sought legal advice prior to writing to the members in question. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the Prime Minister will take whatever steps are necessary to see that the C.B.C. has the same opinion on this matter as the Department of Justice and that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation will conduct itself accordingly.

Mr. Raymond Langlois (Mégantic): Mr. Speaker, I think there might be two solutions to this problem. One would be to keep members of parliament off television, which in some cases might be a public blessing. The second is that if they are to be allowed any out of pocket expense money they should be required to submit an itemized expense account in relation to all expenses which are legitimate. Otherwise, in view of the example cited by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Douglas), if some of the crown corporations operate in this way with regard to expenses they incur I can very well imagine why every year they have a deficit.

The law certainly needs some clarification and perhaps some amendment. At the moment, any member of a crown corporation or of the House of Commons or Senate can unwittingly find himself in quite a serious situation. I think it is up to us to look into the matter and to bring in the necessary amendments to patch up the law, if you wish, so that such a situation will not come about. It is up to the government to bring in the exact formula, which I presume they will do before some other awkward situation pops up where one of our colleagues either in the house or the Senate will find himself in a serious position, and we will have to bring in some amendments at that time.

[Translation]

Mr. Grégoire: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. member for La-pointe rising on a point of order?

Members' Acceptance of Fees from C.B.C.

Mr. Grégoire: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I should like to quote standing order 30 of the House of Commons, which says:

If anything shall come in question touching the conduct of any member, or his election, or his right to hold his seat, he may make a statement and shall withdraw during the time the matter is in debate.

Now, the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Douglas) has made his position clear and has taken this opportunity to make his statement. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, he and the sixteen others referred to by the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) and who do not intend to make a statement, should now withdraw from the house, as required by standing order 30, before debate on this matter continues.

Therefore, I ask that this standing order be applied and that the seventeen members mentioned withdraw, unless they signify immediately their intention to make a statement on that matter.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: I suggest that the hon. member for Red Deer be given the opportunity to make a statement while the Chair reflects on the point or order raised by the hon. member.

[Translation]

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Speaker, on that same point of order. I would like to point out that standing order 30 clearly stipulates that: "he shall withdraw during the time the matter is in debate". The debate is fully under way and after the statement of the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Thompson) it will be too late—

Mr. Speaker: Order. It might have been better if the hon. member had risen on a point of order earlier. But he waits until the hon. member for Red Deer has the floor and without knowing what he will say. It might be a good idea to hear him first.

• (3:40 p.m.)

[English]

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, my remarks will be very short. I believe the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Douglas) has brought up a very important point. I think the majority of the members in this house, at one time or another, have received from public funds money to cover legitimate—

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. MacEwan: Speak for yourself only.