

Tabling of Documents

giving advance copies under embargo to critics, the Language Commissioner and so on.

I hope the Speaker and the House would agree that it is not fair to all Members if only some Members of the House have complete access to a Bill and make comments publicly before all Members can make those same comments. It leaves many of us in a position where we cannot properly defend the interests of our constituents.

• (1110)

Mr. Speaker: Are there any Members rising on this Question of privilege?

I think the Chair can dispose of it appropriately by reminding Hon. Members that this matter has come up before and I have ruled there is not a prima facie case. I would so rule in this particular matter, especially having listened to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Hnatyshyn) and hearing the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East (Mr. Allmand) who, of course, accepts the explanation of the Minister of Justice.

Having said this, Hon. Members can understand the difficulty in which the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East finds himself, along with other Members, no doubt, if statements are made in advance of a Bill being introduced into the House, and if those statements are made, giving the impression—even though it may not be the fact—that someone else has a copy of the document itself.

However, in this case the Hon. Minister of Justice made it quite clear that that was not the situation. He has also made it quite clear that a copy of the Bill was given in the usual and traditional ways to the interested members of the Opposition.

While I understand the complaint and concern of the Hon. Member, this is not a question of privilege. I thank the Hon. Member for bringing the matter to the attention of the Chair and to this Chamber, and I thank the Hon. Minister of Justice for his very frank presentation which has been helpful to the Chair.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

TABLING OF CODE OF ETHICS CONCERNING EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS IN CANADIAN COMPANIES OPERATING IN SOUTH AFRICA

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 67(2) of the House of Commons, I am tabling in both official languages the code of conduct of employees of Canadian corporations operating in South Africa.

[*English*]

WAYS AND MEANS

TABLING OF NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 84(1), I have the honour to lay upon the Table copies of a Ways and Means motion to amend the Income Tax Act.

Pursuant to Standing Order 84(2), I ask that an order of the day be designated for the consideration of the said motion.

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES—FOURTH REPORT OF STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE

Mr. Charles Hamelin (Charlevoix): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fourth report the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 99(2) of the House of Commons, the committee asks the Government to table a response to this report within 150 days.

[*English*]

The report makes recommendation for necessary changes to official languages policy and programs within the federal jurisdiction as a result of testimony received from 16 government departments and agencies.

[*Translation*]

The committee firmly believes the Treasury Board must play to a greater degree its key role in the co-ordination of official languages programs for the whole Public Service, and it recommends that the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Mazankowski) present Parliament with a report on the status of official languages at the time the Main Estimates are tabled.

The committee further recommends that a plan regarding official languages be submitted each year by all federal departments and agencies to the Treasury Board.

[*English*]

Also included are recommendations that the minimum language knowledge level of positions offering a service to the public be eliminated in favour of an intermediate knowledge level and that managers and supervisors be required to possess a superior knowledge of the second official language.

[*Translation*]

Finally, the report recommends an efficient control system be established for the payment of the bilingualism bonus.