

penitentiary service and we have agreed we will in this case permit entry of some journalists into the Laval maximum security institution under certain conditions. I will be getting in touch with certain journalists in this regard.

With regard to the report in question I received it on Monday this week. There were findings in the report of maladministration and negligence. There were 16 recommendations, 14 of which have to do with improvements in the institution and we are already taking action on this. There is one recommendation in respect of discipline and this is under consideration at the present time.

**Mr. O'Sullivan:** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I hesitate to do so, but I find myself having to do so because of the minister's continued refusal to make a statement on motions about this very serious situation.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member knows very well that is not a valid point of order.

The hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka.

**Mr. O'Sullivan:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member indicated at the beginning of his remarks that his alleged point of order had to do with the alleged failure of the minister to make a statement on motions. Unless the hon. member has another reason, that is not a valid point of order.

**Mr. O'Sullivan:** Mr. Speaker, my point of order refers to Beauchesne's Fourth Edition at page 134, section 159(2) of which I am sure Your Honour is aware. It reads:

A Minister of the Crown is not at liberty to read or quote from a despatch or other state paper not before the House, unless he be prepared to lay it upon the table. This restraint is similar to the rule of evidence in courts of law, which prevent counsel from citing documents which have not been produced in evidence. The principle is so reasonable that it has not been contested; and when the objection has been made in time, it has been generally acquiesced in.

My point of order is that the minister's failure to make a statement on motions makes me very aware of the fact that the minister was reading his answer and the minister must now under the rules table the entire document.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The citation to which the hon. member has referred deals only with instances in which a minister of the Crown in making an announcement or in making a comment or speech in the House refers to an existing document of some sort in the possession of the minister of the Crown which is not in the possession of the House in which case he must identify it and lay it on the table. Certainly, documents, in that sense were not intended to cover brief notes the minister may have in order to prepare himself to answer the questions put to him during the question period.

The hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka.

### Oral Questions

#### CONSUMER AFFAIRS

DIFFERENTIAL BETWEEN PRICE OF C GRADE AND A GRADE BEEF—STEPS TO PROTECT CONSUMER UNTIL FOOD PRICES REVIEW BOARD REPORT AVAILABLE

**Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Yesterday in the House the minister mentioned a forthcoming report by the Food Prices Review Board concerning the price discrepancies between C grade and A grade beef. Will the minister indicate what intermediary steps he is taking to protect consumers from these price discrepancies until the Food Prices Review Board report is released.

[Translation]

**Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I think this report will be made public in the near future and I would ask the hon. member to wait for its recommendations before asking me to take action.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

MERCURY POISONING STUDIES ON GRASSY NARROWS AND WHITE DOG INDIAN RESERVES—NEGOTIATIONS WITH ONTARIO TO ALLEVIATE SITUATION

**Mr. Wally Firth (Northwest Territories):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of the Environment. I should like to ask the minister whether the government has undertaken any studies concerning mercury poisoning on the Grassy Narrows and White Dog Reserves in northern Ontario?

[Translation]

**Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, studies are presently made on the mercury content in fish, but the regulations on fishing of mercury-contaminated species are made by the Department of National Health and Welfare.

[English]

**Mr. Firth:** I have a supplementary question for the same minister. Have any negotiations been undertaken with the Ontario government on how to clean up this pollution?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sauvé:** Mr. Speaker, I could not answer affirmatively, but I think that it would be advisable to direct that quite specific question to my colleague the Minister of State in charge of Fisheries.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### PUBLIC SERVICE

INCREASE IN UNILINGUAL FRENCH POSITIONS—APPLICATION OF MERIT SYSTEM

**Mr. A. D. Alkenbrack (Frontenac-Lennox and Addington):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the