

therefore, suffer a loss, if world shortfalls are shared equally, of up to 200,000 barrels a day." My understanding at the moment is that this redistribution has not taken place but the companies have indicated there is a prospective interruption under the *force majeure* provision of the supplying contracts. I repeat, our right to receive the oil is subject to contracts between a Canadian party and a foreign party, and I am advised that one of the terms of the contract is this *force majeure* provision which could result in a pro rata reduction of the deliveries of oil under contract. We, therefore, as a recipient of the oil, are subject to the conditions of that contract.

Mr. Stanfield: I apologize for pursuing this matter, Mr. Speaker, but it is one of vital importance. Is the minister doing anything to look after the interests of the people of this country or is he simply taking the view that a multinational oil company is invoking the *force majeure* clause and shipping the oil somewhere else? What is the minister doing to look after the interests of Canadians either with respect to cuts which have already taken place or cuts which he says are anticipated?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, I think we are governed by the law in this situation. The government, like an individual party, has to be governed by the law covering this particular transaction. It is on this basis we have been dealing with the Canadian recipients of this oil. This, as I understand it, is the international practice and one by which, because of the legal obligation, we are bound.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the Chair might recognize the hon. member for Peace River on a supplementary, although we have gone beyond the time allotted to the question period.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): I should like to ask the minister, before he meekly accepts this interpretation of a contract by an international company in relation to its own subsidiary, whether he has examined the contract in question and determined whether that interpretation so conveniently made is in accord with Canadian or Venezuelan law, and will he take competent legal advice—I emphasize the word "competent"—as to the application of the conflict of laws principle to this contract?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): I have no hesitation in accepting the competence of my advisers on this particular question.

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

Mr. Danson: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, at the time of the adjournment last night I was speaking in the debate on Bill S-4 and I called it ten o'clock. I notice, looking at *Hansard*, that the hon. member for Timiskaming is recorded as calling it ten o'clock. Obviously the reporter did not hear me. I believe the hon. member for Timiskaming will appreciate the fact I was speaking at the time and had not completed my remarks.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member's point is hypothetical since we are dealing with another order of business this afternoon.

Protection of Privacy

Mr. Danson: I wanted to clear the record before that debate resumes.

Mr. Speaker: I have noted the hon. member's point and when we return to that item we shall take into account his suggestion that he had called it ten o'clock and would have a claim to the first call from the Chair.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

PROTECTION OF PRIVACY BILL

CREATION OF OFFENCES RELATED TO INTERCEPTION OF PRIVATE COMMUNICATIONS BY CERTAIN DEVICES

The House resumed, from Friday, November 23, consideration of Bill C-176, to amend the Criminal Code, the Crown Liability Act and the Official Secrets Act, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, and Motion No. 3.

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, when the debate was interrupted on November 23, I was calling attention to the principle which in my view lay behind the amendment proposed by the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker). I think it might be restated as follows: no person, no organization, no police force, no agency whether public or private, shall have the right, in the event of an emergency whether real or imagined, to interfere with the privacy of any citizen unless that interference is sanctioned by the courts and is conducted under the due process of law.

● (1500)

I think that is an extremely important and fundamental provision in British justice, one that no person in this House or indeed no member of the government ought to interfere with lightly. But the government has seen fit to bring before parliament a bill which, if it is passed, will be a giant step forward in that, for the first time in this country, it will legalize the right of a public body, the police forces of this country, to invade the privacy of individuals who, in accordance with our system of justice, are construed to be innocent until they are proven guilty.

This is an important principle that has been made necessary because it is recognized by the community that those forces that would tear down our institutions now have the technological skill in the field of wiretapping, bugging and use of electronic devices to achieve their ends. This is why it is felt—I believe everyone supports this view—that the police forces of this country should have that same power. Although that is true, that is not to say that Canadians ought to be placed in the position where this right can be used, even for a short period of time, in an untrammelled fashion, without control and without reason. I think it is a sound principle, if we are going to take this step, to ensure at the same time that if the evidence that is going to be gathered is to be used, then it ought to be used only when its use has been sanctioned by the courts, which are the ultimate protectors of the rights of all Canadians.