

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, April 17, 1973

The House met at 2 p.m.

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PRIVILEGE

MR. HALIBURTON—MANNER OF RELEASE OF REPORT ON OFFSHORE LOBSTER FISHERY

Mr. Charles E. Haliburton (South Western Nova): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege this afternoon in connection with a matter of extreme interest and concern to my riding of South Western Nova. The matter relates to the fishing of offshore lobsters.

In this House on April 5 I directed a question to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) about a certain study that was supposed to have been undertaken nearly two years ago. Subsequently, both in the House and in the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry, I raised this issue. On April 4, in response to a question, I was told by one of the officials of the Department of Fisheries that the report should be available within a few weeks. May I stress he said it "should be ready within a few weeks' time".

Within a week, namely, on April 10, the report that I had been asking for for a month or five weeks was released to a newspaper reporter in Halifax and reported pretty fully in the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* of April 11. The publication of the contents of that report and the stories that went out on the wire press have caused serious embarrassment to me since this was a matter occurring within my constituency in which, as I say, I had great interest. It caused me additional embarrassment since I had, after all, been requesting this report and the people there knew I had been requesting it. Indeed, it was in fact released on April 10 as a result of the pressure that had been brought to bear on the government through my questions. Further embarrassment attaches because of the fact that I was asked to comment on the report by various members of the media.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East (Mr. Forrestall):

That this matter and the nature of the procedure for releasing such statements be referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization.

Mr. Speaker: Before the motion could be put to the House for debate and disposition the Chair would have to rule that there was a prima facie case of privilege. Although the hon. member may have a grievance or complaint, I have serious doubts whether his point would amount to a question of privilege which ought to be referred to either the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections or another committee of the House. I think the hon. member has made his point in his presentation to the House in relation to the grievance of which he has

complained, but I doubt that the interests of the House would best be served by having a debate at this time.

Mr. Haliburton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

HOUSE OF COMMONS

EASTER ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council) moved:

That when the House adjourns on Wednesday, April 18, 1973, it shall stand adjourned until Monday, May 7, 1973, provided that at any time prior to that date, if it appears to the satisfaction of Mr. Speaker, after consultation with the government, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, Mr. Speaker may give notice that he is so satisfied, and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice, and shall transact its business as if it had been duly adjourned to that time; and

That, in the event of Mr. Speaker's being unable to act owing to illness or other cause, the Deputy Speaker or the Deputy Chairman of Committees shall act in his stead for all purposes of this order.

Motion agreed to.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

ANNOUNCEMENT OF EXTENSION OF NORAD AGREEMENT FOR FURTHER PERIOD OF TWO YEARS

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, as hon. members know, two major objectives of our defence policy are to protect Canadian sovereignty and, in co-operation with the United States, to make an effective contribution to the defence of North America. These objectives are achieved in part through Canada's participation with the United States in the North American Air Defence Command agreement which is known to all of us as NORAD.

The NORAD agreement was originally signed on May 12, 1958, for a period of ten years. On March 30, 1968, the agreement was renewed with some additional provisions for a further five years. As the end of the five-year renewal period is on the 12th of next month, the Canadian and American governments have been giving consideration to the renewal of the agreement.

The United States government has been actively engaged in the development of modernized air defence systems. Canada has been kept fully informed of the