

port (Mr. Mazankowski) concerning the withdrawal of designated services by flight service centre and coastguard radio operators. The statements made by the minister in the House yesterday led members to believe that designated services were being provided when in fact they are not. Also his remarks led members of the House to believe that there had been no recorded incidents where flight safety had been compromised. This is certainly not the case.

To substantiate my second point first, in the last two days there have been more than 50 major breaches of air safety in western Canada. In fact, these were reported to the Ministry of Transport. I would suggest that some of the more serious ones are very reminiscent of the scenario which unfolded in places like Tenerife and Cranbrook where equipment was left on the runway, where instances of aircraft taking off in different directions on the same runway have occurred.

On the second point I would suggest the minister's statement that designated services are still being provided is not the case. In fact it has been reported widely that operators have withdrawn all services except guarding emergency frequencies. I would ask the minister to withdraw his statements, conduct an immediate investigation and report to the House tomorrow on what he plans to do with this very serious situation.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to respond to the hon. member's question of privilege, because I think it might give me an opportunity to clarify what may have been a misinterpretation. If the hon. member looks at my answer, I think he will see that I said the following:

I am informed that where the prescribed duties are being carried out by the designated employees as per schedule, there are no difficulties.

I think that is the key word. Certainly it was not my intention to imply that in all cases the necessary services to be provided by the designated employees in fact were being carried out.

Furthermore, I indicated at the time that I had not been informed of any recorded concerns of matters affecting safety or security, and that if the hon. member in fact had some examples, I would be pleased to look into them. I have been informed by the department that the allegations referred to in a press conference yesterday in connection with Quesnel, Lynn Lake, Quebec City, Fort Chimo, Lac Rone Riviere, Schefferville, Uranium City and Toronto do not appear to be based on any fact or foundation. As far as the preliminary investigations are concerned, I want to assure the hon. member, the House and the public that these matters are being investigated currently by Department of Transport officials.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE OF PHOTOGRAPHERS IN CHAMBER

Mr. Speaker: Before dealing with the question of privilege of the hon. member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez), may I

Privilege—Mr. Rodriguez

take this moment to inform the House that members will have observed still photographers on either side of the chamber during the last couple of days. Earlier in the week I had intended to indicate that last year this matter was raised with the special committee having to do with television in the House. As a result of the position the print media had been put in since the introduction of television, they are not able to take direct photographs which they can use in print, as is available to the television or electronic media. Therefore, they asked if we might try at some time to experiment with this.

Nothing could be done at that time. Recently I discussed this matter very briefly with the House leaders and indicated that we ought to experiment for a period of a week or perhaps two. During this time it is our intention to take these photographs. They will not be used in any way except for the internal use of the House, for examination by House leaders and discussion with the parties, to determine whether it is appropriate to carry this practice on or discontinue it. If it is appropriate to carry it on, we shall discuss upon what basis, under what controls and under what regulation.

I simply want to indicate to the House that there is this request that these photographs be made available, not only for journalists but for archival and related purposes—for library purposes, biographers and things of that sort. There have been quite a number of requests of this nature. Until we do an experiment of this sort, we are not really able to evaluate the difficulties or the advantages of it. Therefore, this is to be treated purely as an experimental period of approximately a week or ten days, at which time it will be evaluated by House leaders, and in turn, I presume, discussed with caucuses before anything further is done.

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● (1510)

PRIVILEGE

MR. RODRIGUEZ—PROCEEDINGS OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, TRADE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege that I consider to be an extreme one which infringes not only on my rights as a member of this House but on the rights of the members of this House on either side.

The question of privilege arises from an incident which took place last evening at the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs. We are all aware that the standing committees of the House are in control of their own agendas and their meeting times subject, of course, only to this House.

The first meeting of that standing committee last Thursday gave its steering committee a direction by agreeing that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Crosbie), as the person responsible for monetary and fiscal policy in this country, should be asked to appear before the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs first, to be followed later on by the