

am just setting it out as a suggestion. What is said in here is said immediately outside because of television, and everyone knows that. Thus we have to be, and I have to be on behalf of all Hon. Members, very careful to guard the right of Hon. Members to speak freely in this place and to speak with vigour and to search with tenacity for the truth. At the same time, if it requires Hon. Members to sometimes take a little more time before they make a suggestion in here, keeping in mind that what they suggest does go immediately outside, then I would ask that Hon. Members do that.

• (1250)

I will consider the matter very carefully and return to the House at the appropriate time. I thank Hon. Members.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I hesitate to stand at this time but I am very concerned about the last statement you made. I want to clarify it for my own sake and for that of members of my caucus. We agree with you that the televising of our debates in the House is indeed instant broadcasting, if I may, of the proceedings of the House. We also realize that with the modern means of communication that broadcast is transmitted to the entire country very quickly.

I hope I misunderstood you, Mr. Speaker, but I do not want the House to be left with what may be a misunderstanding which I got from your remarks. The electronic *Hansard* of this House is under your authority and is only broadcast under your authority and control. I do not think that I should, at any time, feel threatened or—

[*Translation*]

—threatened, that is the word, threatened as regards my right to express myself freely in the House and to voice my opinions, whether or not they are shared by the Opposition or the Government. That is not the point. The debate in the House is fair, and I think you probably meant to say that we respect a member's right to speak but that there are of course limitations existing in our libel laws that require us to respect the opinions of the other person and not infringe on the rights of those who are on the other side of the question. However, Mr. Speaker, I would like to be sure that the message that comes across is always seen to be what it is: an honest, clear and accurate message from the Members of this House, and that there will be no attempt to tinker with, change or alter the televised message.

[*English*]

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to take any more time on this issue, other than to say that we have had a very useful interchange this morning. The points raised on both sides were appropriate and needed to be made this morning. However, in the same spirit as the comments made by my hon. colleague in the Liberal Party, I would like to say that one of the facets of our parliamentary system which we hold up with a great deal of pride is that which has been the focus of a great deal of discussion this morning, Question Period, and the very

valuable role which Question Period plays in our country and in our parliamentary system.

I would like to add a very deep concern I have, which I do not believe has been stated here today at all. During that three-quarters of an hour Members of Parliament, in a respectful and honourable way, pose questions to the appropriate Ministers of the Crown. That privilege must not be abused and must be respected at all times. I believe that the discussions we have had here today will facilitate that in the future. I just want to emphasize how important that three-quarters of an hour is in this country which prides itself on maintaining the principles of free and open speech.

Mr. Speaker: I will recognize the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister in just a moment. Hon. Members will remember that the Chair allowed the questions yesterday. When I say that what is said in here is said outside immediately, it is only a suggestion that we be as careful as we can.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, as usual my learned friend, the Member for Ottawa—Vanier, made some very salient points on this issue, which points were supported by the Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap. You touched on the fact, Mr. Speaker, that in the course of Question Period and debate we as Hon. Members have to conduct ourselves in a responsible fashion. We must be very, very careful when we attempt to imply motives which may not be desirable or when we attempt to cast aspersions or make innuendoes. I think there has been some slippage in that regard.

Mr. Murphy: By Ministers as well.

Mr. Mazankowski: I listened to the Hon. Member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy) this morning and I will listen to him again if he wants to speak.

Mr. Murphy: No, you heckled.

Mr. Mazankowski: This morning has been a clear example of a Minister of the Crown being profoundly affected by questions and suggestions, either directly or indirectly. He feels very strongly about it. He is an Hon. Member, he is an Hon. Minister of the Crown. He went to some pain and some length to try to outline in full detail the transaction referred to in the course of Question Period yesterday. He feels very seriously grieved by the exchange which took place and by what was reported in the media. That is important and you have touched upon it, Mr. Speaker. It is fair to say, as he alluded in his statement, that his reputation is tarnished and his family is affected.

Mr. Nystrom: Remember Erik Nielsen.

Mr. Mazankowski: All Members of Parliament are affected. Let us not hide that fact. I think the Leader of the Liberal Party made that suggestion when he laid down his four points of conduct in disciplining his Party in matters such as this.