

to the Minister of Public Works requesting that regulations be put in place providing unfettered, unharassed access to this building and providing a specific space for demonstrations.

I was told at the time that part of the motivation for that was the point of privilege of the Leader of the Liberal Party who said that he was unable to get to the Hill because of taxis demonstrating on the Hill. That matter I gather is still before one of the committees of this House, since it was found to be a prima facie case of privilege.

The request was made by the Commissioners of Internal Economy to the Speaker on their behalf to provide these regulations.

The regulations were done according to statutory instruments law. They were posted. There was at least one story in *The Ottawa Citizen*. Anna Marie Tremonti had it on *The National* on March 3, I think. There were discussions among people in various ways.

The fact that the Leader of the Liberal Party now says that he was in the dark about all this is a source of regret. Perhaps we would not be having what is a pretty silly discussion now if he were not in the dark on it.

There was no attempt by anybody to hide anything. What happened was that the government responded to a unanimous request from, among others, the hon. member himself.

Mr. Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the government House leader would have more respect from the members of this House and from the public generally if he would learn to recognize that sometimes he is wrong, that he can be wrong and is willing to admit it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

• (1510)

Mr. Gray (Windsor West): The record of the House into which the Speaker's letter was read said simply that members of the Board of Internal Economy asked that the possibility of regulations—possibility—be looked into.

Privilege

Second, the statutory instruments requirements were not followed in this case. There was not the 60 days' notice required.

I think that the government House leader, I repeat, would be in a better position to do his job if he were willing to accept the fact that contrary to what he suggested during Question Period I was not shown these specific regulations in draft or final form before they were proclaimed.

I also want to say that the issue I raised in the House as a question of privilege involved something quite different from the circumstances behind the regulations we are talking about. I raised a question of privilege because I was in a taxi near the flame, with a number of other taxis that wanted to ride up on the Hill to protest the government's goods and services tax. We were prevented from doing so by the Mounted Police.

I raised a question of privilege because there are precedents dating back hundreds of years in the Parliament of the United Kingdom which show that members of Parliament cannot be impeded, even by the police, when they want to get to Parliament. That is quite a different matter.

I never suggested in that question of privilege that I was impeded by any demonstrators. It was a matter of the RCMP doing it.

I raised the question of privilege which was referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections which, through no fault of the committee, has not dealt with it yet. I was not the source of the issue being raised by the Commissioners. It was a Conservative member.

I ask the minister to get his facts straight. I repeat, if he wants to have any respect in the House as House Leader, it would help if once in a while he would admit that he can be wrong as he was wrong in what he said during the last Question Period.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, I have no trouble admitting that occasionally I am wrong.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Andre: The hon. member said that I should admit that I am in error. He said that this issue was raised by a Conservative member in December. The minutes of the