

• (1220)

My difficulty as your Speaker is that while it is an important matter, it is an important matter because it concerns the well-being of fellow Canadians. That is why it is an important matter. It is also an important matter because it could have been taken from that exchange which I heard, as did other Hon. Members, that there might have been some sort of interim report today, some kind of written report that could have been published or could have been submitted to the House or could have been commented upon or could have been handed to the press.

That might have happened. If it had happened, then certainly the exchange we heard would have been suggestive of that happening. It did not happen. But, as the Hon. Minister has said, there was a report of some sort. It seems to have been verbal. There was a report back to the Government. There is not now an "interim report" in written terms that can be handed to the House or be handed to the press or handed to Hon. Members.

What we are getting into—and it is an understandable thing—is a debate as to what was intended at that time as opposed to what happened today. I repeat to the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) and to the Hon. Member for Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca (Mr. Barrett) that the Chair is not quarreling with the legitimacy of the issue. The Chair is saying, though, that under these circumstances, we have a dispute as to the interpretation of something that was said, an interpretation as some people have said, of facts, but it does not go to the point where it has affected either of the two Hon. Members from carrying out their duties as Members of Parliament.

There is a dispute, it is a legitimate dispute, it is a matter of debate, but it is not a matter of privilege. I thank both Hon. Members and the Hon. Member for Essex Windsor (Mr. Langdon) for reporting the points, and I apologize to the Hon. Member for Essex Windsor because I clearly had not appreciated fully the point the Hon. Member brought to my attention. That does not change the ruling, but I do appreciate his point and I do want him to accept my apologies. Again, I thank all Hon. Members for their submissions. The matter is for now closed.

Tabling of Documents

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

CANADIAN ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

TABLING OF ANNUAL REPORT

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of State and Minister of State (Treasury Board) and Acting President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table in this House, in both official languages, the annual report for the year 1987-88 of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Mr. Speaker, I have a message from Her Excellency the Governor General signed by her deputy.

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SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (B), 1988-89

A message from Her Excellency the Governor General, signed by her deputy, transmitting Supplementary Estimates (B) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1989, was presented by Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of State and Minister of State (Treasury Board) and Acting President of the Treasury Board) and read by Mr. Speaker to the House.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I may just point out to the House, and perhaps you may wish to add to it, the tradition is that when the message is from Her Excellency and signed in her own hand, all Members of the House rise. I tried to emphasize the word "deputy" because I checked with the Table and found that when it is signed by her deputy, there is no necessity for all Members to rise.

REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of State and Minister of State (Treasury Board) and Acting President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 81(6) I move:

That Supplementary Estimates (B), 1988-89, tabled earlier this day, be referred to the several standing committees of the House as follows: