

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Justice):** Mr. Speaker, there are obvious areas in the hon. member's list that would be difficult for provincial inquiries, such as wrongdoings by members of parliament, unless those members of parliament were committing a criminal offence within a province as it would then lend itself to a provincial inquiry. There is the matter of immigration which my colleague, the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, indicated is the subject matter of an inquiry. On the subject of narcotics, the provincial attorney general of British Columbia, myself and our respective officials have been meeting over the past four months in order to devise the best possible way to deal with both the supply situation and the demand situation for narcotics, and how to most effectively deal with drug-related crime that evolves from the drug trade. I mention British Columbia because it has the highest percentage of drug use in Canada and the highest percentage of drug-related crime.

Throughout those discussions among both ministers, our officials and our respective police and law enforcement authorities, nowhere has it been suggested that the appropriate answer to dealing with those problems which are apparent to everyone would be by means of a public inquiry.

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● (1500)

#### PRIVILEGE

MR. WAGNER—REMARKS MADE ON CBC TELEVISION PROGRAM

**Mr. Claude Wagner (Saint-Hyacinthe):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege following the deliberate, Machiavellic and savage smear attack launched last evening against my personal integrity by the CBC's hatchetmen, William MacAdam, Richard Nielsen, et al.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Wagner:** Throughout my public life, I have studiously refrained from suing the media, whose right to irresponsibility has now become, for too many of its representatives, a Canadian tradition. But last evening, treacherous innuendos, unwarranted and unfair, carried by the national network leave me with no alternative but to bring the matter to your attention, Mr. Speaker, prior to pursuing it further in the courts where justice will supersede amateurish sensationalism coupled with hooded anonymity.

I do not have to apologize for having been the most ardent foe and scourge of the mafia since I entered public life in 1960.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Wagner:** I do not have to remind friends and enemies alike of my activities as a Crown attorney and as a judge to end the influence of the underworld in Quebec society. Nor do I have to recall those years of sincere dedication to law and order as solicitor general, attorney general and minister of

#### Privilege—Mr. Wagner

justice, despite the ugly threats to my family and myself requiring 24-hour security to permit me to discharge my duties.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of my record as a crusader against organized crime throughout my judicial and political career. I will not accept lying down the defamation attempt of which I was the victim last evening by the CBC's hired hit men.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Wagner:** Mr. Speaker, no CBC reporter and no CBC producer will do to me and my family what the mafia was unable to do to us in my 17 years of public life. Therefore, on this question of privilege, and with the utmost respect, I rest my case in your hands, Mr. Speaker, hoping that you, and through you the Secretary of State in a statement on motions will secure from the CBC a public apology without delay, without conditions, in the hope that such an apology published by all media will, after the fact, lessen the pain and suffering my family and I have endured.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member has returned to the question of privilege which has been raised in the past few days. The question began in a general form with the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) about a week ago. It has been contributed to on several occasions in the intervening period and there have been some major contributions as a result of events that have taken place since that time. Nevertheless, all of the contributions, including those made yesterday, have a general bearing on the over-all question which I had intended to rule on today if at all possible.

In the light of the notice I received this morning from the hon. member who has just spoken, I thought it would be appropriate for me to hear him before attempting to make a general pronouncement on the questions of privilege, as they relate to the very important relationship between this House and the freedom of the press. I would, therefore, like to take these latest remarks into account and perhaps allow a few more days to pass before I attempt to comment definitively on the relationship between the freedom of the press and the House of Commons in the rather narrow context of privilege.

A point which has some bearing in a rather indirect way, but is nevertheless tied to the actions of the press, was the one raised some time ago by the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. Holt). I indicated earlier that that point remains outstanding as well, and I would like to try to resolve it at the same time. Last week I indicated that hon. members who felt there was something else to contribute to the point raised so ably and thoroughly by the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway ought to be given an opportunity to do so. If there are any contributions which hon. members wish to make, I would certainly hear them now on the point raised by the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway, which concerns the British practice of holding as a breach of the privileges of the House the publication of a confidential committee report.