

*Speaker's Ruling*

until this morning, they would not have had to hold a press conference because I stated very clearly that medicare will remain as it is.

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**THE ECONOMY**

**Mrs. Dianne Brushett (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

In light of recent press reports, both domestically and internationally, reporting favourably on Canada's economy, could the minister tell the House why the economic indicators are looking so good?

• (1500)

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the member undoubtedly knows because she follows this very closely, our growth is up. We are leading the G-7. Our productivity record is superb. Our inflation is very low.

Undoubtedly she is referring to more recent indicators. The composite leading indicator in February was up by 0.5 per cent. In January it was up by 0.6 per cent. Undoubtedly she was referring to the fact that our manufacturing shipments in January were up by 28 per cent over last year.

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[Translation]

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I nearly forgot to ask this important question. I would like the hon. government House leader to tell us about the business planned for the next few days.

[English]

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on Friday, as announced earlier, we will have an opposition day.

On Monday the House will consider Bill C-73 respecting borrowing authority followed by Bill C-68 respecting firearms. Tuesday will be an opposition day again.

On Wednesday the House will consider second reading of Bill C-72 regarding intoxication and when this is completed we will return to the business of Monday at the point it was left off.

Thursday will be another opposition day, the last in the present supply period, which means the House will be asked at the end of the day to vote on final supplementary estimates and interim supply.

On Friday we will begin the second reading stage of the budget implementation bill which we had intended to introduce today but whose introduction has been delayed for technical reasons.

I would like to express thanks to the opposition parties for their co-operation in facilitating discussion and decision last night on the bill to enable work to resume at the port of Vancouver. This attitude on their part is certainly appreciated.

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[Translation]

**PRIVILEGE**

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT—SALVAGING OF THE *IRVING WHALE*—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** My colleagues, yesterday, March 15, the hon. Leader of the Opposition rose on a question of privilege relating to an exchange that had occurred March 14 during question period between him and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment. Having heard from both parties, the Chair undertook to review the situation and the records of the original exchange and to return to the House. I am now ready to rule on the matter.

[English]

I have carefully reviewed the comments from both hon. members. I thank them for their interventions. With regard to the basic differences of opinion that exist between them I must conclude this is a dispute as to facts or interpretation of facts. As such, it is a matter of debate and does not constitute a prima facie case of privilege.

However, on careful review of the records of the original exchange, the Chair has found some troubling anomalies. As I see it, it is these anomalies to which the hon. Leader of the Opposition takes exception and it is here that the Chair must take action to grant him redress.

[Translation]

Let me review the sequence of events which leads me to this conclusion. The original exchange on March 14 took place in French. It was taped and transcribed; the transcription was edited; the edited transcript was, as usual, distributed to the intervenors for review. The Office of the Deputy Premier Minister reviewed the transcript as usual and submitted, as is its right, two suggested changes to the blues. However, in the view of the Chair, these suggested changes ought not to have been accepted nor printed as the official record for they constitute a substantive difference to the original spoken words of the hon. member. To further complicate matters, these changes appear in the French *Hansard* but are not reflected in the English version which is, instead, a literal translation of the original spoken word.