

MR. BRISCO—NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD HEARING IN
VANCOUVER, B.C.

Mr. Bob Brisco (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, if I may turn for just a moment to something which is perhaps a little more enlightening, yesterday when I rose on a question of privilege you, sir, indicated that it was not a question of privilege but made a contribution in your summary which was of significant value. I want to report to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the House that on the basis of perhaps our mutual contributions on the question of the National Energy Board, it has today adjourned the meeting in Vancouver until January, 1980. I thank you for your help.

MR. KAPLAN—STATEMENTS MADE BY MINISTER OF
EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION

Mr. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question of privilege arises out of statements made by the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Atkey) on December 6 before the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration. He appeared before the committee to deal with his estimates. On that occasion he announced a cutback was taking place by the government in its program to support publicly sponsored boat people as refugees from Vietnam. He indicated that in taking his decision he had consulted with the provinces.

● (1540)

I have a transcript here of his remarks before the committee where he said:

—committee members appreciate that federal-provincial consultations are an important part of my mandate—

Later he said:

And at the same time I should say that virtually all those provinces made the point—and this was made no more strongly than by Mr. Couture in the province of Quebec—they said: can you not find some way to provide increased food and medical aid to the victims of starvation in Kampuchea, Thailand. And it is having all those factors in mind—

He was referring to the consultations. Subsequently, an article appeared in *La Presse* on December 7 in which Mr. Jacques Couture denied that he had been consulted by the minister and denied that he was in favour of the change which the minister had indicated he was making after several provincial consultations. Yesterday, for the first time, I was able to speak to the office of Mr. Couture, the minister of immigration in Quebec, and was able to confirm from their point of view the accuracy of this report, that is, that Mr. Couture had not been consulted about these changes and that he did not approve of them.

In view of that, Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege, perhaps as much as anything, to give the minister an opportunity to indicate whether he or the minister of immigration for the province of Quebec was making accurate statements about the consultations which are alleged to have taken place.

Government Motions

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am sure the hon. member will realize that for me to permit this would be an extension of the committee proceedings into this House in this way. That is an unwarranted extension of our practice. If the matter is to be pursued any further, it will have to be done in committee or in some other way on the floor of the House. To raise in this way what is evidently a dispute between two persons, one of whom is not a member of this House, on a matter which took place outside this House, would seem to be inviting an extension of committee proceedings on to the floor of this House. The matter will have to be pursued either in committee or brought on to the floor of the House in some other way before I can deal with it.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

REVIEW OF PRAIRIE FARM REHABILITATION ADMINISTRATION

On the Order: Government notices of motion:

December 10, 1979—The Minister of Regional Economic Expansion—The following proposed motion:—That the Standing Committee on Regional Development be authorized to review: the present role of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration in keeping with perceived federal responsibilities; whether the legislative base of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration should be expanded to include non-agricultural areas and other sectors of the economy, or whether these activities should continue to be implemented under the general Department of Regional Economic Expansion legislation; whether the agency should continue to operate under the auspices of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion; whether the agency should operate in the prairie provinces only, or whether there is a requirement for similar programs in other parts of Canada; whether the agency should continue to exist as a federal agency and if there are any changes to be made in its management and administration;

That the committee report back to the House of Commons no later than September 1980, on any legislation required to implement the committee's recommendations; and

That the committee be empowered to retain the services of expert advisers and to commission studies or research to assist in its work and that it also be empowered to retain such professional, technical, clerical and stenographic help as may be required.

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 21(2) this notice of motion stands transferred to and ordered for consideration under government orders later this day or at the next sitting of the House.

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WAYS AND MEANS

MOTION REGARDING CUSTOMS TARIFF

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 60, I now table in both official languages, a notice of ways and means motion regarding the Customs Tariff, and request that you designate an order of the day for the consideration thereof.