

*Point of Order—Mr. McGrath*

A minister of the Crown is not at liberty to read or quote from a despatch or other state paper not before the House, unless he be prepared to lay it upon the table. This restraint is similar to the rule of evidence in courts of law, which prevent counsel from citing documents which have not been produced in evidence. The principle is so reasonable that it has not been contested; and when the objection has been made in time, it has been generally acquiesced in.

That document may very well shed new light on the matter which is before the House which has seized the attention of the House and was officially brought to the attention of the House by the Solicitor General on Friday last.

At the same time, Your Honour, I would refer you to references which have been made, in answers to questions in the House by the Solicitor General, to a letter which appears in the affidavit referred to in the question period today and yesterday. The affidavit was filed with the Quebec commission of inquiry. The affidavit refers to a letter between the then director general of the security services and the Solicitor General. Numerous references have been made, as Your Honour will learn upon examination of the record, to that letter.

The letter has been the subject of questions, and I submit that it clearly falls within the interpretation placed upon these matters by Beauchesne and by our Standing Orders. I respectfully submit that the Solicitor General, who has already agreed to lay this letter before the federal commission of inquiry, the McDonald commission, should be obliged under the rules, traditions and practices of the House to lay the letter on the table of the House.

**Mr. Lang:** Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, I think it is obvious that the Prime Minister, to whom reference was made, would have to be here for there to be a final disposition of this question. However, I would just like to say at this time that it did not seem to me that he was indicating specifically that he was quoting from a document.

**An hon. Member:** Yes, he did.

**Mr. Lang:** Hon. members, as I have, probably read the words referred to this morning in a newspaper, and perhaps that is the document which was being quoted from.

**Mr. Speaker:** As I have always attempted to do in the past, I think I should follow the practice of inviting representatives of the government, as I will, to examine the transcript of today's proceedings in order to see what the Prime Minister in fact said, and then to pursue arguments as to whether that technically constitutes the citation of a document.

The conditions which require a document to be produced are quite clear and capable of very precise definition, and if those conditions exist, I am sure they will be immediately recognizable. Therefore, I invite hon. members on both sides who are interested in this argument to examine today's transcript and to renew the argument on Monday, as I will, to see whether the circumstances are such as to warrant production of the document pursuant to our practices.

**Mr. Paproski:** Mr. Speaker, you could check the video-tape also.

[Mr. McGrath.]

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

## WEEKLY STATEMENT

**Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I must say that the hon. member for Edmonton Centre is fairly close to the mark, now that we also have an electronic *Hansard*. However, that is not the reason I rose.

I want to ask the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council whether he can advise us of the business of the House for the balance of today, and what the intentions of the government are with respect to Monday and next week as far as he can see.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Pinard (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, during the time we have left this afternoon we shall continue consideration on third reading of Bill C-3 concerning the reorganization of Air Canada. If we conclude the third reading today we shall continue with Bill C-8 entitled an Act to amend the Canada Labour Code. Monday morning we should proceed with consideration of Bill C-5 entitled an Act amending the Canada Elections Act and Monday night with Bill C-11 of the Minister of Finance amending the fiscal legislation. Mr. Speaker, as concerns our business for the following days and the rest of the week it will depend on the duration of the debate on Bill C-11. We should be able to inform the House leaders of the opposition on this subject next Monday.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[English]

**NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

## TABLING OF REPORT "PEOPLE IN ACTION"

**Hon. John Roberts (Secretary of State):** Mr. Speaker, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 41(2), I should like to table in the House copies, in both official languages, of "People in Action", a very important report of the National Advisory Council on voluntary action, to the Government of Canada.

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**ANTI-INFLATION BOARD**

## TABLING OF REPORTS MADE TO ADMINISTRATOR

**Mr. Ed. Lumley (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 17(2) of the Anti-Inflation Act, I wish to table, in both official languages, copies of reports sent to the administrator by the Anti-Inflation Board.