

*Privilege*

with the potential for staff lay-offs in the future, is the government really committed to the concept of the NCC playing a pro-active role on behalf of the entire nation? If not, why not? If it is, when is it going to prove it?

**Hon. Paul Dick (Minister of Supply and Services):** Mr. Speaker, the National Capital Commission plays a very important role in the life of the community of Ottawa, being the nation's capital. With a budget of in excess of \$96 million a year, I think any other city in the country would also be pleased to have such a forthright and progressive institution.

The fact that the cut-backs happen to be with regard to the residences of the Prime Minister and Rideau Hall do not affect the ongoing programming the NCC is carrying out.

**Mrs. Gaffney:** Mr. Speaker, obviously the Minister for Supply and Services does not support the National Capital Commission.

In 1986 cabinet approved an expanded mandate for the National Capital Commission with the key objective of, and I quote, "making the capital more representative of Canada and ensuring that it is perceived as such by all Canadians".

If this government is really committed to the National Capital Commission, why is the minister making it impossible for it to carry out its mandate? How can the minister seriously expect the NCC to maintain a nation's capital of which all Canadians can be proud?

**Mr. Dick:** Mr. Speaker, I do not understand. We are very much in support of the NCC and think that the chairman has been doing an excellent job.

However, it is obvious that the Liberals would sooner have a new roof on the Prime Minister's residence than get on with the new programming and the work carried out by the NCC.

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**PRIVILEGE****CONTENT OF BROCHURES—PROPOSED GOODS AND SERVICES TAX—SPEAKER'S RULING**

**Mr. Speaker:** I should advise the House that I have two questions of privilege to deal with.

On November 20, 1989 the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands raised a question of privilege related to certain pamphlets on the goods and services tax which a constituent of his had informed him were being distributed in a local grocery chain outlet.

In view of the Chair's ruling on October 10, 1989, the hon. member questioned the propriety of the distribution of the pamphlets. He suggested that this constituted a contempt of the House, pointing out that in the text of the pamphlets the presumption that the GST will be law by January 1991 is everywhere asserted with none of the appropriate references to the legislative process through which the GST must pass.

[*Translation*]

Later that day, the Minister of Finance rose on a point of order to explain that the pamphlete in question were part of the initial information package prepared by the Department last summer and distributed last August. The Minister assured the House that the distribution contracts for the dissemination of that material had been completed by October and that, subsequent to the Chair's ruling on the advertisements for the GST, steps had been taken to have all offending materials returned to the department.

[*English*]

The hon. member for Windsor West intervened to question whether the disputed material was still being distributed.

[*Translation*]

The Chair undertook to look further into the matter. I have now carefully considered the issue raised by the Honourable Member for Kingston and the Islands and the remarks made by the Honourable Minister of Finance. It appears that the point at issue is the timing of the removal of the pamphlets from public distribution.

[*English*]

The Chair is satisfied that the material in question was part of the summer advertising campaign and that given the intricacies of the nation-wide distribution of such material some time delays may have occurred in recovering material from that campaign. The minister has assured the House that the department had taken appropriate steps to have the material returned to it and has asked, in light of the complaint raised by the hon.