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environmental due process in this country and we are entitled to debate it.

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. This is the first of one or two requests for an emergency debate. I would request that the Standing Orders be enforced and that the submission be made and that there be no debate. Otherwise, we are at a complete disadvantage on the government side. We may wish to respond. We do not. We respect the rules and we ask the hon. member to respect the rules.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice raises a matter which has been raised before. Hon. members know what the practice is and as your servant, I must apply it.

The matter the hon. member for Winnipeg Transcona raises is clearly an important matter. That was evidenced earlier today by questions put by the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle and the answers by the minister who was acting today for the Minister of the Environment.

I say it is an important matter for some of the reasons that the hon. member put forward but I am not satisfied that today is the day to proceed to an emergency debate.

ATLANTIC CANADA FISHERY

Mr. Fernand Robichaud (Beauséjour): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 52, I too ask leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a very urgent and serious matter, namely, the escalating crisis in the cod, lobster, snow crab and herring roe fishery in Atlantic Canada, a crisis characterized by the numerous shutdowns of fish plants, loss of jobs and the subsequent closing of entire communities.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, it is quite obvious that the government has not yet understood the real dimensions of the crisis, and we would like to have—

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: I would ask the hon. member to consider his remarks carefully. I think this was the very objection that was taken. There is no need for an argumentative presentation. I have the facts. I also thank the hon.

member for presenting me with a very clear letter indicating the situation. If the hon. member would like to close off his remarks, I will hear him.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robichaud: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We would just like to have an opportunity to raise the issue and show the real dimensions of the crisis and its effects on families and communities in Atlantic Canada. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: Again, the issue is very important. Of course, all hon. members in the House of Commons are well aware of the serious crisis affecting Canadians who live in the Maritimes. Yesterday and today as well, there was much discussion on it and probably there will be even more in the coming days. However, I do not think it is necessary today to decide on an emergency debate. I would remind hon. members for their information that immediately before the Christmas break, there was an emergency debate. It may not have dealt with all the subjects raised today by the hon. member, but it certainly touched on the overall situation.

I will follow developments every day this week and also in the weeks to come, but for now, I do not see the need to accede to this request.

• (1510)

[*English*]

FAMINE IN ETHIOPIA

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask for an emergency debate on the situation in Ethiopia.

The famine in Ethiopia is again reaching crisis proportions with an estimated four million people at risk of starvation and the effects of the drought in Eritrea and Tigre are daily growing worse.

This situation is aggravated by a long-standing war in the region. The severity of this famine is not well understood in Canada, and perhaps for this reason, Canada has not yet provided its characteristic ready response to this international distress.

For this reason, I am asking for an emergency debate so that the Canadian public can once again be informed of this situation and the political and environmental