

Official Languages Act

within five years. The member for Îles-de-la-Madeleine (Mr. Béchard) says it is up to the provinces to do that. We spent \$53 million to learn that English was spoken in Ontario and French in Quebec. Why don't we spend another \$53 million to teach both languages to the young people of Canada and within five years Canada will be a bilingual nation. That is all I have to say, Mr. Speaker.

● (1430)

[English]

Mr. Murta: Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order respecting the import controls on beef and pork which have been imposed by the United States government over the past few days. The reason for my point of order is this. The situation might be very serious in terms of pork for the immediate term, and in terms of beef for the long term. We could be talking about a loss in sales of up to \$100 million. I think to a great extent the government has brought on the problem by its own fumbling and mismanagement—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the hon. member be good enough to come to his point of order.

Mr. Murta: My point of order is this. The minister indicated that he would make a statement in the House telling the Canadian people what the government is proposing to do. Even if the government is going to meet with officials of the United States government in the near future, I still feel that it is up to the Minister of Agriculture to give some explanation to the Canadian people so that we know what the government is doing, if anything.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Jarvis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. In yesterday's *Hansard*, at page 1496, in reply to a question by my colleague the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Roche) regarding the world food conference in Rome, the Minister of Agriculture replied, in part:

I will be making a more detailed statement tomorrow, and I hope that some of these questions will be answered at that time in more detail.

This simply confirms the assurance that I thought some of us had from the minister that a detailed statement on the world food conference in Rome would be made on a day not later than today. I can appreciate the minister's very serious difficulties in attempting to draft a statement that would bring some credibility to the government, but that is not my question of privilege. My question of privilege is that yesterday in this House the minister assured us in unequivocal terms that a statement would be made today, and he has not risen in his place to do so.

Mr. Whelan: Mr. Speaker, when I said yesterday that I would make a statement today, I did not know that my colleague, the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Chrétien), had made arrangements to make a statement today, so I thought I would make mine tomorrow, and that is what I intend to do rather than take the time of the House today.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

[Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue).]

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. member for Greenwood rising on the same point of order?

Mr. Brewin: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I want to associate myself with the hon. member for Perth-Wilmot (Mr. Jarvis). The minister did say he was going to make this statement on an extremely important subject, and I am wondering what is keeping him from doing so.

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TRANSPORT

SUGGESTED CO-OPERATION WITH UNITED STATES IN RE-OPENING SEAWAY—REQUEST FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO MOVE MOTION

Mr. Tom Cossitt (Leeds): Mr. Speaker, I rise pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 43 to ask the leave of the House to move a motion that is self-explanatory and which I feel should meet with approval from both sides of the House. I ask permission to move, seconded by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker), the following motion:

In view of the most serious situation created by the blocking of the St. Lawrence seaway as a result of the sinking this morning of the Canadian freighter the *Roy A. Jodrey* in United States waters, off Wellesey Island west of Brockville, Ontario, the House requests the Minister of Transport to offer immediate and full co-operation to American authorities in taking any steps necessary to re-open the channel and that the minister advise the House as to when it is expected the seaway will re-open as indicated from the latest information available to him.

Mr. Speaker: Before putting the question pursuant to the motion under Standing Order 43, with regard to the proposed point of order raised by the hon. member for Lisgar (Mr. Murta) and supported to a certain extent by an alleged question of privilege by the hon. member for Perth-Wilmot (Mr. Jarvis), the point of order is not, of course, valid in view of the fact that the minister, as I recall, indicated yesterday that he hoped he would be making a statement today. Comment may be valid in respect of the minister's statement, but there is no requirement at all that the minister make a statement at any time. Therefore, I cannot accept that the hon. member's point constitutes either a question of privilege or a point of order.

This motion having been proposed by the hon. member for Leeds (Mr. Cossitt) pursuant to Standing Order 43, it requires unanimous consent of the House before it can be debated. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.