

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, I rise on the question of privilege. I will be brief, and I will obey the rules of the House.

First, I must express my surprise that the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss Bégin), who has risen on this day when the government is desperate to demonstrate its respect for women, did not give me notice of a question of privilege relating to me, and my surprise that she did not rise at the first opportunity available to her, which was yesterday—if she was sincerely interested in this question—instead of simply using this matter as a means to shorten a debate on an allotted day.

Some hon. Members: Order!

Mr. Clark: That deals with the minister.

Respect for the Chair is crucial to the conduct of this House, and I would not want to see that respect eroded by any member of this institution. My interjection yesterday was inappropriate for an officer of this House, and I consequently withdraw that interjection.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Speaker: The hon. member for Restigouche (Mr. Harquail).

Mr. Harquail: Madam Speaker—

An hon. Member: No. That is the end of it.

Mr. Paproski: Order.

Madam Speaker: Order. I am sorry. Indeed, since the right hon. member has withdrawn the words, which I am sure went beyond his thoughts, the question is now closed.

* * *

● (1530)

POINT OF ORDER

MR. BOSLEY—CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION—
RADIO-CANADA JOURNALISTS DISPUTE

Mr. John Bosley (Don Valley West): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order which has nothing to do with House business. My point of order is this. Last Wednesday, as reported in *Hansard*, the government agreed to appoint a special mediator to look into a most unhappy strike that has been going on in the CBC in Montreal. I understand the mediator was appointed and so I was expecting a statement on motions today. Since I gather he has reported to the minister and our interest in this matter is critical because, unhappily, there is a growing sense in Quebec that the government is not interested in settling the strike because it prefers the news blackout on constitutional matters, my point of order is to find out from the minister whether he proposes to speak on this on motions, because I think a member of the House has asked him to do it during question period. I think the minister has an

obligation to report on motions on the mediator's response to him. I assumed that it would be done as soon as the report had been made to the minister, which I think is now.

Madam Speaker: Did somebody wish to respond to that?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, obviously the hon. member has no point of order. He was unable to get the floor during the question period to ask a question, which would have been the proper way for him to bring this matter forward if he had an inquiry to make. Certainly there is no point of order.

The mediator who is seized with the responsibility of investigating the present situation with regard to the strike to which the hon. member has referred is vested with that responsibility. Any report he has made has been of an interim nature. He has spoken of meetings with the parties pending a meeting of the membership of the union over the weekend. Indeed, as I said at the time of his appointment, he was appointed to carry on exploratory mediation to see if the parties are in a mood to make the concessions necessary on both sides for an agreement to take place. That may be a very difficult course to steer, and I do not believe the mediation is helped by having a daily report in the House on the result of his meetings. That is not the way that mediation works.

I want to stress that the role of the Department of Labour is that of an arbiter, a helper between management and the trade unions involved. There is no proper way by which we can force parties to change their positions or to agree, under a free, collective bargaining system. Our role is to provide help at the appropriate moment, and we are attempting to do that through the appointment of one of the most able mediators existing in any jurisdiction in Canada. That is all I can say on the matter at present, except to repeat that obviously there is no point of order.

Madam Speaker: I think I have to tell the hon. member that his point might have been raised more properly during the question period. I know that the hon. member was trying to get the floor, and I must tell him that he was next on the list but the clock did not permit me to recognize him. When hon. members wish to pursue a question of this nature, there is a proper time at which to do it.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

WAYS AND MEANS

EXCISE TAX ACT

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 60, I am now tabling a notice of ways and means motion