

I invite Your Honour to consider the point that he has raised. If Your Honour finds a *prima facie* case, I can say that the committee will be happy to undertake the appropriate study should it come our way.

The Speaker: My colleagues, I treat all questions of privilege as being very serious in nature. I will indeed review all of the information put before me. With the permission of this House and after due consideration if it is necessary I will come back to the House with my decision.

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● (1515)

POINTS OF ORDER

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, as you are aware, last night I spoke during the Adjournment Proceedings. In accordance with Standing Order 37(3) on October 28, I informed the Speaker of my dissatisfaction with the answer I received from the Minister of Canadian Heritage about my question on his letter of intervention to the CRTC.

Yesterday prior to 5 p.m. and in accordance with Standing Orders 38(3) and (4) the Deputy Speaker informed the House that my question would be raised during the late show; reference *Hansard* page 7753.

During the late show the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue stated, and I quote from *Hansard* at page 7767:

—I am not prepared to respond to the question of October 28th. I am prepared to respond to the question of October 24th.

Standing Order 38(5) is clear. Ministers or parliamentary secretaries are to respond to the matters raised by members. Not only did the parliamentary secretary not respond to the matter I raised; she admitted she was not prepared to respond and she apologized for not doing so.

The matter raised in my question relates to a serious matter which was before the House for two weeks. I wished to clarify for the House during the late show issues relating to the incompetence of the Department of Canadian Heritage and the minister's letter of intervention to the CRTC. However I have been denied the due process of the Adjournment Proceedings.

I am informed that there is no precedent in this regard. Further, I have not found one instance where the government ever refused to answer a question raised in the Adjournment Proceedings. I remind the Speaker that the Adjournment Proceedings have been a parliamentary procedure for 30 years.

This is an unacceptable precedent for the government to have set. In order to redress this procedural breach I request a written response from the government to the issue I raised last night and

Supply

ask that the response be given in the House during tonight's Adjournment Proceedings.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member suggested in her comments that she was having trouble establishing the incompetence of the Department of Canadian Heritage and for very good reason. That is because it is headed by a very competent minister and is very well administered. I will leave that part of her remarks aside and deal with the substance of the procedural point that I know she wanted to deal with in her remarks. She got sidetracked by these kinds of partisan comments about the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

The fact is that the parliamentary secretary who was here last night to answer was not the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage who was unable to be present last evening. She found herself in a position of having been given a set of notes in anticipation of a question on the subject that was not hers to deal with and that she had to give on the spur of the moment. As it turned out it was the wrong set of notes for the wrong question. A mixup had occurred for reasons beyond her control.

Accordingly she felt it inappropriate for her to attempt to come up with an answer to the hon. member's four-minute address on the issue. I may say the suggestion the hon. member has made, that the answer be given tonight on the late show in a special two-minute addition to the late show or a two-minute feature for the parliamentary secretary to give the answer, is one that is quite satisfactory as far as the government is concerned.

I am pleased, if the House agrees it be done, that the two-minute address be given tonight. I realize the hon. member would not have her four-minute speech before it but she gave it last night. We will have the four minutes last night and the two minutes tonight and I think everybody will be happy and in fact pleased to agree.

The Speaker: It seems we have found a solution to our little dilemma. I hope that is acceptable to the hon. member and all other members of the House, and it will be so ordered.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—THE RAIL SYSTEM

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to have the opportunity this afternoon to speak briefly on the motion before the House.