

out that our own House had never followed the British practice in this area. He went on to express his concern that, while the complaint appeared to attack the press, it made no criticism of the attitude of Members themselves in respect of confidential documents.

He came to the conclusion that he could not allow such a matter to proceed as a *prima facie* case of privilege until the problems raised by this kind of case had been further considered by the House or one of its committees.

I fully understand the concern of the Hon. Member for Calgary West that a document, the content of which clearly indicated its confidential nature until tabled in the House, was prematurely released. If the Chair were to be guided exclusively by British practice, it would have to find that there was *prima facie* evidence of a breach of privilege. Although no evidence has been introduced which might help to place responsibility for the leaking of the document to the press, the press itself must take responsibility for the premature disclosure of a report it knew to be confidential until presented to the House.

This House has a very proud record of concern for the freedom of the press. Our practice has always been to lean toward press freedom rather than apply the test of privilege on every occasion. The rulings I have cited of my predecessors bear this out. Two of these cases involved an even larger question of privilege—the leaking of draft reports prepared before the committee had reached any final conclusions. In the circumstances, I feel I should follow these precedents and rule that this matter cannot be accorded precedence over all other business.

Nevertheless, this ruling should not be interpreted as a *carte blanche* exoneration of the press on any and every occasion that documents known to be confidential are prematurely disclosed.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I just wanted to be on record that I unequivocally apologize for any statement I may have made owing to my enthusiasm to greet back to this House one of our distinguished parliamentarians after a long absence, namely, the Hon. Member for Red Deer (Mr. Towers). We are all glad to see him back.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Speaker:** No apologies were needed or necessary. Perhaps I could add my personal best wishes to the Hon. Member.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

*Statement by Minister*

• (1510)

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### FINANCE, TRADE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

#### PRESENTATION OF FOURTH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

**Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs, in both official languages. The committee has considered Bill C-30 and is reporting it without amendment.

[Editor's Note: For above report, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]

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### TRANSPORTATION OF DANGEROUS GOODS ACT

#### TABLING UNDER SECTION 28—CORRECTION OF ERROR IN FRENCH VERSION

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, under the provisions of Standing Order 46(2), and having regard to the fact that it has been drawn to my attention that there was a typographical error in the French version of the document that I tabled in the House last Friday, I should like to table a new document reflecting the corrected version. It concerns Protective Direction No. 1 under the provisions of Section 28 of the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act.

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### DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

#### TABLING OF 1983-84 ANNUAL REPORT

**Mr. Chris Speyer (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 46(2), I am pleased to lay upon the Table of this House the 1983-84 Annual Report of the Department of Justice in both official languages, and I ask that it be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

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### ORGAN DONOR WEEK

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, there was to be a statement from myself regarding Organ Donor Week. In that it is an Opposition day, I do not want to take too much time of the House, specifically that of the Opposition. However, I take this opportunity to invite all my colleagues to the Commonwealth Room to sign their donor cards, so that we can get on with what I think is a very worthwhile project. With regard to what the Right Hon.