

to earlier in the House by the Hon. Member for Hamilton East, and that offer had been declined.

Ms. Copps: That is totally false.

• (1520)

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps I can assist the Hon. Member for Hamilton East and the House. I will look very carefully at what *Hansard* reports. If it is appropriate I will come back into the Chamber with this matter. If I need any further assistance from Hon. Members I will call for it.

The Hon. Minister on a point of order.

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POINT OF ORDER

A GIFT OF GREEN GRAPES

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I want to object to the production and sending of these sour grapes which were sent to me during Question Period. If we are going to start throwing fruit around during Question Period we will not be having very fruitful Question Periods because the grapes of wrath will seize the House.

Are we going to permit the production of these kinds of exhibits? A rotting salmon was brought in at one time, or was it a mackerel?

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Speaker, we saved 400,000 spawners.

Mr. Crosbie: You did? I do not know whether this will save the grape industry, but I do not believe this should be carried around the House by pages, and not with notes.

Ms. Copps: Why do you not read the note?

Mr. Crosbie: The note says: "Please tell the truth and help the trade victims". That is an allegation that I do not tell the truth, but I am not going to bring it up because we have had enough of that today.

Mr. Speaker: I am terribly grateful to the Hon. Minister for not bringing it up.

The Chair noticed that there was a basket of grapes in the House some time ago. Messages were sent to the Member who seemed to be the owner of the basket of grapes. The basket of grapes was then put underneath the Member's desk. How the grapes got from there to the Hon. Minister I do not know, but I must say that the Hon. Minister is absolutely right. It is not according to the rules to pass grapes or other things like that back and forth across the House, and most certainly it is less than elegant to send notes such as the note of which the Hon. Minister complains. The note was, I take it, a private communication and was not brought to the attention of the Speaker.

Privilege

PRIVILEGE

COURT MARTIAL RESPECTING SUBMARINE CASE

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Mr. Speaker, this is not an easy situation in which to raise a question of privilege which I honestly believe has grave merit. It was with some regret that I gave you notice and now seek a hearing on the question of privilege I described in the notice which, as you know, involves the actions of serving officers of the Canadian Forces.

As I indicated to you in my notification, the basis of my claim is a violation of my privilege as a Member of Parliament by reason of the gratuitous interference in the performance of my duties and what I honestly believe to be an attempt to intimidate me to prevent me from investigating and commenting upon what were apparent acts of violence reported in the media as a result of a court martial under the National Defence Act.

The court martial involved two members of Maritime Command, then Petty Officer Timothy C. Farler and then Master Seaman Ryan M. Buttar. This case attracted wide regional attention as well as national attention. Members of the House of Commons will know that in yesterday's *Quorum*, circulated to all Members and to many other people connected with the Parliament of Canada, there was a report of this case and the surrounding circumstances originally published in *The Globe and Mail*. I do not need to convince you, Mr. Speaker, that this is a matter of wide and serious concern.

I believe there is a clear *prima facie* case disclosed in published media reports, particulars of which appeared in *The Daily News* of Halifax on August 11, 1988, and I have provided you with a copy of that publication. At this time I do not have access to the transcript of the remarks as reported in the court martial, but I have made attempts to ascertain from persons in attendance at the court martial that the report in *The Daily News* is a reasonably accurate presentation of the thrust and tenor of the remarks made by serving officers in the court martial.

If you affirm my view that there is a *prima facie* case, Mr. Speaker, I am, of course, prepared to present a motion requesting reference of this matter to the appropriate committee, which I assume is the Standing Committee on Elections, Privileges and Procedures.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that you recognize a substantive difference between the question of privilege I now raise and the matters of privilege which you have just witnessed in this Chamber. If you will allow me the time, I would like to begin by reviewing what I consider to be the relevant considerations.

Mr. Speaker: I want to assure the Hon. Member for Halifax West that I have received material from him. I take this as a very serious complaint and want to assure the Hon. Member that I will listen very carefully to his entire submission. The Hon. Member.