

—after June 17, 1987—

There will be:

—rules relating to dividends on preferred shares paid—

—which will be amended—

—after June 18, 1987.

This means that these rules apply immediately. Mr. Speaker, I know that you are a patient man, for which I thank you, and I do not intend to read each of the 13 measures which are in effect at this very moment.

Mr. Speaker, the worst of the matter is that we were told the exact opposite yesterday. There is no need to repeat the words of the Prime Minister as recorded in *Hansard* when he clearly stated that there would be no Ways and Means Motion accompanying yesterday evening's documents. Yet, such a motion was tabled, contrary to what he said in reply to a question asked by the Hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent). The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) also added:

● (1210)

[English]

The White Paper is not a budget. It is something entirely different from a budget, as White Papers have traditionally been since this country was founded. brev'

The Minister of Finance said in answer to a question by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner):

Mr. Speaker, I want to draw one single fact to the attention of the Leader of the Opposition. This is not a Budget. It is a White Paper. It is a proposal on tax reform.

I would now like to cite another answer that the Minister gave, and this one is very funny. He said:

—so they can understand the technical impact of these proposals to make sure that when the proposals are brought in in the form of either a White Paper or a Budget—

So at this particular point in time the Minister is not sure anymore. He says "either a White Paper or a Budget".

I submit that all of the Members of the House were misled by declarations made yesterday, including yourself, Mr. Speaker. You were called upon at one time to make a ruling on a question of privilege raised by the Leader of the Opposition concerning the gang of 20 which we now know was a gang of 31 who had privileged information. One of the items upon which Your Honour based his judgment was that you yourself, as I will quote, thought that we were dealing with a White Paper. Your Honour even quoted the Minister to buttress his judgment. You said:

The Hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) made the point that the White Paper was not a Budget—

I think that Your Honour was right in saying that because that is what we all thought after what we were told.

Your Honour then rendered a ruling which only goes to prove that the Chair also was co-opted, just as all the rest of us in the House were co-opted, as was everyone in Canada who

Privilege—Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques)

thought that the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister were true when they said that there would be no Ways and Means motion, that this was not a budget but simply a White Paper.

It is not possible for Members of the House of Commons, who have a duty to perform to represent their people back home, to operate under false premises, to get ready for very important events, very important announcements and not to know exactly what is going to happen—as a matter of fact, to be fed information that is completely contrary to what later proved to be the case.

In that sense I would say that this is one of the most blatant examples of the rights and privileges of each and every Member of the House being trampled upon.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, this is why I am asking you to examine this question and to make a ruling. If, as I believe, you find that there is a *prima facie* question of privilege, I shall be ready to move the necessary motion to refer this whole matter to an appropriate committee of this House.

[English]

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Mr. Speaker, I believe that the privileges of Members have been seriously compromised. As a tax practitioner for many years and as a Member of this House since 1978 I can say standing here in my place that we have been subjected to a budgetary process in all but name.

Going back to the time of James I we know the significance that is attached to budgetary measures which are the privilege of the House of Commons. One of those privileges is that we have a debate on a Budget. The question I raise, Your Honour, is this. Are we now in a position in the governing of this country where our Government is entitled to bootleg a budget in as a White Paper and remove the very significant privilege of a full six-day debate in the House?

In terms of Your Honour addressing this question of a violation of Members' privileges, I would like to add an additional point which I think is very significant. Drawing upon some of my own expertise, and I know of your own, Mr. Speaker, when I look at this paper, when I look at the Notice of Ways and Means, I see the changes in capital cost allowance and I see the imposition of sales tax. I see the changes that are taking place both under the regulations and through additional impositions of tax. I say that this has all the constituent elements of a budget. Not only does it have all the constituent elements of a budget legally, but the whole *ambiance* which we witnessed yesterday, the procedure with respect to a lock-up and the entire proceeding, has been that of a budget in all but name.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the privileges of Hon. Members here in the House are very seriously compromised if we accept