

stop-trading order on Astra Trust when the department was trying to get on top of violations of regulations by Astra Trust? Surely, a stop-trading order would have saved the loss by innocent people of millions of dollars?

[Translation]

Mr. Bussi eres: Madam Speaker, I would like to get some information from the Superintendent in connection with the specific question put by the member to give him an adequate reply.

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[English]

PRIVILEGE

MR. COSSITT—ALLEGATION OF EXISTENCE OF GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES RESPECTING ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Madam Speaker: The hon. member for Leeds-Grenville (Mr. Cossitt) has produced a two-page document entitled "Sensitive Topics—2nd Session, 30th Parliament" which includes as item (z), "Any question in the name of the honourable member for Leeds". The hon. member alleges that the document "is a copy of a document originating in the Privy Council office" and that the same instructions have been issued for this present Parliament.

However, there is no evidence on the face of the document which could lead to the conclusion, let alone indicate, that it is an emanation of the Government of Canada, although it contains the following words at the top right-hand corner; "Secret—Not to be photocopied or reproduced". The hon. member's question of privilege is to the effect that such alleged instructions interfere with his ability to perform his parliamentary work and other official work.

On the other hand, the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard), speaking for the government, advises the House that "no instruction has been given not to reply to the questions asked", but that "on the contrary, instructions are to try to provide to the hon. member the most complete answers possible to as many questions as we can."

At the outset, let me assure hon. members that a contempt against one Parliament may be raised and is punishable in another Parliament. While it is correct to say that the government is not required by our rules to answer written or oral questions, it would be bold to suggest that no circumstances could ever exist for a prima facie question of privilege to be made where there was a deliberate attempt to deny answers to an hon. member, if it could be shown that such action amounted to improper interference with the hon. member's parliamentary work. In any event, I am not now called upon to determine this. In fact, it is far from clear that the document has any official aspect to it, let alone that it amounts to improper interference.

Under the circumstances, I am compelled to find that there is no prima facie case of privilege. Of course this is without prejudice to the matter being raised in some other way or in

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the light of further and additional facts being raised again under the heading of privilege.

MR. FRIESEN—RESERVATION OF RIGHT TO RAISE POSSIBLE QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta): Madam Speaker, on just returning to the House after speaking on the adjournment debate of Thursday evening, I have looked at *Hansard*. After studying the answer given to me by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Duclos), I would like to reserve my right, while I determine whether or not I have a question of privilege, to raise a question of privilege.

Madam Speaker: Since the hon. member was not in the House over the past few days, I would remind him that he must give me proper notice and a written statement on the object of his question of privilege.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the OECD, I would like to table, in both official languages, a copy of a letter from the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) to the Secretary General of that organization.

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[Translation]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

PROCEEDINGS ON PROPOSED BILL C-51

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, following consultations with my counterparts in the opposition parties, I rise on a point of order to call your attention to a bill to amend the Clean Air Act, of which notice was given and which appears in today's order paper. We have agreed that we would see the bill through the three stages today when government orders are called, that one representative for each party would deal with it on second reading, following which the bill would be referred to Committee of the Whole, and then returned to the House for adoption on third reading. All of which, Madam Speaker, should require little time. With the consent of my colleagues, therefore, this bill should be the first item to be considered when government orders are called later on today.