

Tributes

In addition, as I mentioned a year ago, the rules of the House specify that all reports, returns and papers to be laid before the House in accordance with the requirements of the statute are automatically referred to a standing committee, pursuant to Standing Order 32(5). Consequently, ministers and departmental officials must ensure that required documents are tabled so the House has a copy for the information of members and for review by one of its committees.

The requirements contained in our rules and statutory laws have been agreed upon by this House and constitute an agreement which I think all of us realize must be respected.

There has been a growing number of complaints raised by members in the past year about responses to petitions not being filed within the required time and answers to written questions being answered late. I understand that we live in an imperfect world. Nonetheless, what I refer to is all on the record and today I am dealing yet again with a document not being tabled within the legally prescribed time period.

In addition, the member for Winnipeg South Centre raised the issue on March 29, 1993 that the government was in breach of Standing Order 109 by not presenting the comprehensive response to the report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade on the future of Canadian military goods, production and export to the House within the 150 days required.

[*Translation*]

Members cannot function if they do not have access to the material they need for their work and if our rules are being ignored and even statutory instruments are being disregarded.

[*English*]

I believe the House management committee should be given the opportunity to look into this whole question of late tablings. I am therefore prepared to find a prima facie case of breach of privilege and allow the hon. member for Scarborough—Rouge River to move a motion referring this matter to committee.

In this way I am allowing the House to decide whether or not it shares my concern about the growing severity of this problem. The House may then decide whether or

not it feels the House management committee should be tasked with considering the issue.

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for a ruling which I believe will fortify the rules and procedures which will enable Parliament to better reflect the will and franchise of Canadians. Accordingly, on behalf of all the members of the House, I move:

That the matter of the non-observance of the tabling requirements for Order in Council PC 1992-2715 and other documents in the House of Commons be referred to the Standing Committee on House Management.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

THE LATE ALEXANDER BELL PATTERSON

Mr. Speaker: I am very grateful that many hon. members have remained. Our colleague, Alex Patterson, who was well known to many of us in this place, and certainly well known to all of us from British Columbia, has passed on. This is our first chance since that happened to speak appropriately of Alex and give our proper sensitivities to his family. I am going to ask the hon. member for Fraser Valley East to commence.

• (1520)

Mr. Ross Belsher (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour today to say a few words to note the passing of Alex Patterson, a former member of this House of Commons and my predecessor as the member of Parliament for Fraser Valley East.

Alex Patterson spent most of his adult life working on behalf of the people in Fraser Valley East. He represented the riding in Parliament for most of the period between 1953 and 1984. In that period he earned a reputation as a hard worker and served as an MP for both the Social Credit Party and the Progressive Conservative Party.