

the answer and give an answer that is correct as of the date we are tabling the reply.

I suspect that part of the problem the hon. member encountered in this case is that the information available to the department on the date the question was put was different from the information when the answer was tabled some two months later. Additional or supplementary information was provided by the minister this morning. I tabled that on the minister's behalf.

In light of all that I do not understand how the hon. member can argue that his ability to perform his functions as a member of Parliament have been impaired by this answer. That is the nub of the issue on a question of privilege. If his ability to perform his functions are impaired, I suggest to him the thing for him to do is put more questions on the Order Paper and ask more detailed questions so he gets more detailed answers.

I am sure if he does that he will get the answers he wants. But reading from selective reports and then suggesting that because those reports are different from the answer when, as the minister has pointed out there are many reports, is not correct. It is not fair.

It is not impairing the hon. member's ability to carry on his functions. He is obviously able to carry them on because he has all the reports in his possession and is able to read and quote from them in this House. If that is the case how are his abilities impaired, and if they are not, there is no question of privilege.

The Speaker: Colleagues, I think that for my purposes at least at this point what I would like to do is review the answer which was tabled today. I would like to review the information the member put before us on another day and has brought back with more information today. I will have a look at the information. At this point at least, subject of course to my looking at it and reflecting on it, I am not convinced that there is a question of privilege.

• (1530)

However, if the House will give me the time to review the documents that have been placed before me, I will come back to the House if necessary.

I move now to the second question of privilege of the hon. member for Scarborough—Rouge River.

PRESS GALLERY

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, earlier today I was denied access to press gallery room 130-S on two occasions. I understand a similar occurrence took place a few days ago with respect to another member; I was

informed of it by the member. Although I am prepared to move a motion, I state for the record that the essence of the privilege matter is the denial of access of a member or members to rooms on the parliamentary precincts.

In view of the season, our agenda this afternoon, and the fact that I would like to think it was a simple misunderstanding with the press gallery, perhaps I could suggest that Your Honour take the matter up with the press gallery to ensure that there are no misunderstandings about the rights of all members to have access to all open rooms in the parliamentary precincts, barring of course the other place beyond the bar, washrooms of the opposite gender and common sense things. If you would do that, Your Honour, I think it might clear up the matter.

The Speaker: It is a point of information; I am not sure it is a question of privilege. I will undertake to get more information on what precisely has been happening in the last few days especially with respect to room 130-S. I will give the information to the hon. member or indeed share it with the House if I feel it is necessary.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-53, an act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Hugh Hanrahan (Edmonton—Strathcona, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, once again it gives me great pleasure to discuss Bill C-53, an act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage.

It would be useful to state unequivocally that the Reform Party does not support the bill. The reasons for this are numerous. Since I have spoken on the bill during first and second readings and have participated in committee and report stages, I feel most of what I have to offer has already been stated. Therefore I will not deliberate at great length on the issue.

However I would like to summarize the key aspects of the bill. First let us look at multiculturalism. As I mentioned yesterday in the House, as a member of the Standing Committee on Heritage I had the opportunity to listen to witnesses describe multicultural federal funded programs as divisive and that they focus on our differences rather than on our similarities. This is ultimately the opposite outcome to that which the government had intended for the program.