

*Privilege*

members of the force. That is why the House gave it second reading.

I commend it to the committee and to the House. It is designed to protect and enhance the position of the force as the prime policing organization in Canada and perhaps in the world.

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**PRESENCE IN THE GALLERY**

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, I would like to call your attention to the presence in the gallery of four very distinguished visitors to our House today.

I would like to introduce to you the Hon. Henry N.R. Jackman, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**The Speaker:** Also, I would like to introduce to you the Hon. Ed Tchorzewski, Deputy Premier of Saskatchewan.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**The Speaker:** As well, I introduce to you the Hon. Glyn Murray, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office of Barbados.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** Dear colleagues, I would also like to acknowledge the presence in our gallery of Antonine Maillet, the distinguished author from New Brunswick and a source of great pride for Canada.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

[*English*]

**The Speaker:** I have a point of privilege and three points of order which I would like to hear.

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**PRIVILEGE****COMMENTS IN QUESTION PERIOD**

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I raised a question of privilege on November 2, 1994 regarding an incident that arose from question period on November 1, 1994.

As you are aware, Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister quoted from a letter I wrote to the Minister of Canadian Heritage regarding a concern of one of my constituents. This was done without my prior knowledge or permission or the prior knowledge or permission of my constituent.

At that time the Deputy Prime Minister stood in the House and argued that the letter was public domain. It was on this argument that the matter was dropped.

Since then I have received a copy of a letter from the CRTC to my constituent which was in response to my letter. In the letter from the CRTC the manager of correspondence and complaints division writes: "In accordance with your rights and the CRTC's obligations under the Privacy Act, unless you advise the commission otherwise, within three weeks of the date of this letter it will follow the usual practice of placing a copy of all correspondence related to your complaint on the licensee's publicly accessible file".

Clearly the CRTC regards the correspondence relating to my constituent's complaint as private as defined in the Privacy Act.

The letter from the CRTC is dated December 13, 1994. Considering the three-week requirement before making the correspondence public, my letter to the minister was not a public document until January 3, 1995.

The Deputy Prime Minister quoted from my letter relating to my constituent's complaint on November 1, 1994, two months before the letter was deemed a public document.

• (1505)

In light of this new information, Mr. Speaker, I ask that you reconsider the matter. If in your deliberations of whether what I raise today constitutes a prima facie question of privilege, I ask that you consider the following.

By making my private letter available to the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Canadian Heritage breached confidentiality. In so doing he interfered with my ability to function as a member of Parliament by calling into question whether issues on which constituents asked my assistance will be made public.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you find this to be a prima facie question of privilege. If you do so find, as is the usual practice of the House, as described in Beauchesne's sixth edition, citation 118, I will move that this question of privilege be referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are two points for the Chair to consider. I submit this does not constitute a valid point of privilege.

The allegation is that there was a breach of confidentiality by the CRTC in giving information to the Deputy Prime Minister and that this may have been a violation. This is not acknowledged by our side at all. Even if it was, it would constitute a dispute in law on whether that law was breached. It is not something that the Speaker usually rules on. The Speaker has made the point on several occasions in the past that his role is not to discuss whether an issue is legal or otherwise but only whether the privileges of members of the House have been violated.