

express a judgment within a minute or so after the minister finishes.

● (1212)

If the government expects co-operation not only in this matter but in other matters that affect the House of Commons, then I say most seriously to the Minister of Finance that he had better change that decision and change it fast. He is not going to have as an unqualified right the opportunity to manipulate the news media—because that is what is involved—and at the same time expect to get co-operation on this matter or other matters in the House of Commons from opposition parties.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: The minister knows as well as any other member of parliament that this place just will not function unless he behaves in a civilized and decent manner and respects the rules of fair play for both sides of this House.

So I say to you on this question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, that the minister had better change that decision and change it fast or the normal working relationship between the parties in this House is going to break down and break down completely.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will hear the minister's intervention in a moment. I will recognize the minister on a point of order as it reflects on proceedings later in the day. I think I should establish clearly, however, that what the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby has raised may indeed touch upon co-operative arrangements for the better and more intelligent debate of events that will take place later in the day and throughout the debate on the Speech from the Throne. It relates to co-operation between parties, however, and there would be no requirement that the Chair could refer to or no obligation in any circumstances of consultation with other members in respect of any speech by the Minister of Finance during the debate on the Speech from the Throne. I could not, therefore, begin to classify it as a question of privilege. The point is made, however, and I am sure the minister would want to contribute to it by way of a point of order.

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that the hon. member became so aroused. I talked with his House leader earlier who asked some very reasonable questions. I told him that I would allow critics of his party to come to my office. I wanted to be courteous enough to have the critics for the opposition in my office to discuss that beforehand.

Mr. Broadbent: Half an hour before.

Mr. Chrétien: I thought half an hour was enough. If it is felt they need more than half an hour, that is all right. Everyone knows me; my speech will be very short. It is not going to be an hour and a half speech; it is going to be 20 minutes. I would like it to be short, precise and to the point. I was led to believe that the critics of the Social Credit Party and of the Tories

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could understand it in half an hour but if the critics of the NDP need an hour, I can have them in my office an hour earlier.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Jones: Mr. Speaker, I think there is a question of privilege involving an independent member who does not belong to any of these so-called political parties. If a document is going to be presented to the leaders of the parties, I think there should be fair play to the independent member of parliament. There should be some equality. If there is a question of co-operation here, then I think there should be co-operation toward a person who does not belong to a party. I have a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker and I think Cabinet ministers should start to recognize this privilege.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Again, the hon. member raises a point that may have to do with co-operation but it does not have to do with the regulations precedents or practices of the House. There is nothing to which the Chair could refer to as a basis for deciding the hon. member's point would constitute a question of privilege.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

TABLING OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN FORCE AND NATIONAL REVENUE

Hon. Francis Fox (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, with the consent of the House, I would like to table copies in both official languages of a document entitled Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of National Revenue, Taxation and the Department of the Solicitor General of Canada, as I had promised in my answer to a question of the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) during the oral question period yesterday.

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[*English*]

TARIFF BOARD

TABLING OF REPORT ON PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Mr. Ed. Lumley (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I should like to table copies in both official languages of an interim report of the Tariff Board recommending certain changes in rates of duty on processed fruits and vegetables.

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.