

I am satisfied that the funding for the next two years, which would have required Treasury Board approval, would and should have been honoured. So, Madam Speaker, the commitment was more than simply a handshake or a partisan gesture, as the minister said, on the eve of an election. It was a genuine, well-discussed and well-thought-out-proposal that was to be honoured and should be honoured, and I hope and trust that the Minister of Transport will change his mind and look at the file—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. It is very hard for me to see whether or not that point of order is well founded and I would have to check the record. Since the minister is not present in the House at this time, we will leave that point of order in abeyance and see whether the minister wishes to reply to it at another time.

I have notice of a question of privilege from the hon. member for Humboldt-Lake Centre (Mr. Althouse).

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PRIVILEGE

MR. ALTHOUSE—CONTENTS OF TELEX RESPECTING PLANT BREEDERS' RIGHTS

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre): Madam Speaker, in the last day or so a copy of a telex has found its way to my office. The telex, addressed to the attention of all directors, was issued on July 25 of 1980. Its contents read as follows:

The NDP is forwarding you a questionnaire on plant breeders' rights. I suggest that you and your scientists do not reply.

It is signed by A. A. Guitard who, I understand, is the research director for western Canada. All of this is under the Department of Agriculture.

I have realized for a long time that plant breeders' proposals are controversial and that there are strong feelings in all sectors of agriculture and within the agricultural community, including research people, in connection with that issue. I also understand the difficulties faced by plant breeders, a great many of them being civil servants who are unable to speak out. I realize that they have strong opinions, as they should, because the outcome will affect the kind of job they are doing. At the same time I am very cognizant of the fact that they are in that position, and for that reason no such questionnaire was ever considered, prepared, or issued. The closest thing to that type of questionnaire we have ever undertaken is a question which I put to my constituents on the back of my *Householder* which I will be sending out next Monday on what they think of plant breeders' rights. I ask them to respond either for or against them.

The matter which I raise as a question of privilege today is with regard to the wording of the telex which specifies that a questionnaire is being forwarded by the NDP. This is not a request by management alerting people to the fact that we might or might not be submitting a questionnaire, or mentioning that possibility. It states specifically that the NDP "is

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forwarding" such a questionnaire. This leaves the implication that this is the case, which it is not. It puts all of us in a rather strange position.

Here we have a directive from a research scientist, which Mr. Guitard is, a man accustomed to dealing with hard facts. Either he has forgotten his lifelong training, which I doubt, or he has been fed some facts which turn out not to be facts, or has been fed information which he believes to be factual. Again this implies that either some untruthful information is being disseminated in the department about myself or my party, or that such information is being gathered and provided, which, in either case, does not make me feel any more happy about it.

Because this directive indicates anticipated actions which we have not taken, and states that a certain event will take place, it presents what history has proven to be an untruth or, to use a more parliamentary term, inaccurate information. I think we have a question of privilege before us and I would ask you, Madam Speaker, to consider all the facts and to give them your attention.

Madam Speaker: It seems to me, first of all, that the hon. member is referring to a telex which dates back to July 25, 1980. I understand from the hon. member's intervention that the telex was announcing something that was going to happen later, and therefore the hon. member probably waited to see whether that action would in fact take place. I would remind the hon. member that questions of privilege must be raised at the earliest opportunity.

However, that is not the substance of his question of privilege. I do not find a question of privilege in the point raised by the hon. member. He has probably a grievance. He is complaining about improper information being sent to someone. Also, the hon. member himself is not personally implicated, and the reference is rather to the NDP party, so the privileges of the hon. member have not been directly breached by this action, it seems to me. At any rate, the privileges of members do not extend outside of the House, so I really feel that the hon. member has only a grievance. We have heard it now, and I do not see a question of privilege in his point.

● (1220)

MR. WADDELL—STATEMENTS MADE BY MR. ANDRE

Madam Speaker: The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) on a question of privilege.

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Madam Speaker, last night when the hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre) was speaking in the debate on the Petroleum Administration Act, as reported at page 5121 of *Hansard* he had the following to say:

The New Democratic Party energy critic, the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell), was bordering on McCarthyism in some of his remarks which were directed at the hon. member for Capilano (Mr. Huntington).

Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I was in the House last evening and I heard the exchange which took place in the debate to which