

Petitions

prosecutorial discretion charges should be laid and, in the case of the commissioner, whether disciplinary proceedings should be embarked upon. The commissioner has not yet reported to me on the question of disciplinary proceedings, but he has not yet got the results of the decisions made by attorneys general, federal and provincial, on the question of whether charges will be laid. I am in no way critical of the commissioner nor do I consider him dilatory in not responding yet to the recommendation that he consider disciplinary charges.

The attorneys general have their own responsibilities; they are not accountable to me. It was my duty to bring matters to their attention and I did so. I suggest that if the hon. member has concerns about the way they are performing their responsibilities, provincial or federal, he should ask them.

IMPLEMENTATION OF FILE-DESTRUCTION POLICY

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby): Madam Speaker, apparently there is one rule in Canada for the postal workers and another for the RCMP, an attitude which was just condemned by the Canadian Civil Liberties Association.

In view of the fact that one of the most serious revelations of the McDonald commission was the fact that the RCMP holds files on over 800,000 Canadians, many of which should never have been opened, when is the minister going to keep the promises he has made on many occasions, to implement a file-destruction policy and put an immediate end to this gross violation of the privacy of thousands of innocent Canadians?

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General): Madam Speaker, I have indicated that I consider 800,000 individual files an excessive number to be held by the security service of the RCMP and that many of those files should be destroyed. However, with the prospect of prosecutions or disciplinary proceedings that may well involve matters contained in those files for all I know, and defences may be raised that require production of those files, I felt it in order to postpone any file-destruction policy which I fully intend to implement in due course. I consider it proper to postpone that destruction until the possibilities of prosecution and discipline are dealt with. Considering that hon. members opposite must surely want fair trials to be available to those who become defendants, I think those files should be preserved until then.

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PETITION

MR. LEWIS—LANDED IMMIGRANT STATUS FOR VISITORS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

Madam Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the Clerk of the House has laid upon the Table the one hundred and eighty-first report of the Clerk of Petitions stating that he has examined the petition presented by the hon. member for Simcoe North (Mr. Lewis) on Monday, February 15, 1982, and finds that it meets the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

POINT OF ORDER

MR. HAWKES—DELAY IN DISTRIBUTION OF "HANSARD" COPIES TO CONSERVATIVE MEMBERS—STATEMENT BY MADAM SPEAKER

Madam Speaker: I should also like to give the result of the inquiry I made into the request of the hon. member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes) for information about the delay in publishing *Hansard* the other day. My information is that a computer broke down in the Printing Bureau when printing French *Hansard* and consequently, according to our practice, the distribution of English *Hansard* was delayed. The *Hansard* was ready at 11.25 a.m. and some copies were put at the doors of the House of Commons. Usually the pages deliver copies to the leaders of the parties in the House and also to members who request them. Eventually we ran out of copies and only some 25 members were able to get a copy of *Hansard* for the question period.

We apologize, but the delay was due to a breakdown in the computer in the Printing Bureau. We hope that will not happen too often.

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PRIVILEGE

MR. WADDELL—ANNOUNCEMENT OF COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO SINKING OF "OCEAN RANGER" OIL RIG

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Madam Speaker, I gave you notice that I wished to raise a question of privilege with respect to the statements made in the House yesterday by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard), as reported at pages 14996-7 of *Hansard*, and a subsequent press release dated February 15, 1982 under the authority of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde).

Yesterday in the House, as reported at page 14996 of *Hansard*, the hon. member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) raised a point of order because an announcement was to be made that afternoon establishing a formal inquiry into the Hibernia matter and was not being made properly, that is, in the House of Commons, giving hon. members an opportunity for reply.

At page 14997 of *Hansard*, after an intervention by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), the President of the Privy Council said:

—Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) has just told me there will be no announcement today. Under the circumstances, there is no problem.

Later yesterday afternoon, after a press conference, Members of Parliament received a copy of a press release which reads as follows:

Transport Minister Jean-Luc Pepin and Energy Minister Marc Lalonde today announced that the federal government will hold a formal inquiry to investigate all aspects of the loss of the drilling rig *Ocean Ranger* off Newfoundland early today.