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police forces of the provinces. I hope that answers the hon. member's question.

● (1550)

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order at this time, in accordance with the citation which says that the sort of point of order I am raising should be raised when a reference is made to certain documents. Perhaps we will not need to argue this until a later occasion, as the minister or some other minister may agree to table the documents. It seems to me, however, that this is an instance when the documents ought to be put on the table of the House. I draw to Your Honour's attention citation 159 of Beauchesne's fourth edition. Please take note of paragraph (2) which says:

A minister of the Crown is not at liberty to read or quote from a despatch or other state paper not before the House, unless he is prepared to lay it upon the table. This restraint is similar to the rule of evidence in courts of law, which prevent counsel from citing documents which have not been produced in evidence. The principle is so reasonable that it has not been contested; and when the objection has been made in time, it has been generally acquiesced in.

The first sentence of paragraph (4) says:

Official papers quoted during a debate should be laid on the table of the House.

At the end of paragraph (4) Beauchesne says:

Mr. Speaker ruled: "That the point of order was well taken, and that the papers cited by the honourable members for Essex and Northumberland should be placed in the possession of the House".

I had paragraph (5) in mind when I raised my point of order. It reads:

The point of order, that a member should lay on the table a document which he quotes, should be taken when reference is made to the document.

May I point out that the Minister of Labour has based his whole case on documents which were turned over to him on April 29, 1975, by the Minister of Justice. He did not stand up and say he had made his own decision. The whole case is based on material supplied to him by the Minister of Justice, as set out in paragraph 1 of his statement which says:

This further investigation results from new material which was turned over to me by the Minister of Justice on April 29.

Likewise, in paragraph 14 the minister said:

The outcome of the justice department investigation, as the Minister of Justice disclosed on April 29, was that no further inquiry by his department was necessary in view of the evidence obtained by his officials. If there was to be a federal inquiry, it would be initiated by the labour department under the terms of the Canada Labour Code, and it would relate to industrial relations matters alone.

There is an appendix, or chronology, attached to the statement. On the last page, paragraph 18 again refers to material that was turned over to the Minister of Labour by the Minister of Justice. How can we assess the meaning of the minister's decision which he says is based on certain material if we do not have that material? It may well be, from what the minister said a moment ago, that after he discusses this question with the Minister of Justice or other officials he will come forward in a few days and table the document. That being the case, I do not see the need to argue the point extensively now. I want to enter this caveat, as it were: it seems clear from the citation and from our practices that the minister, having cited, having

[Mr. Munro (Hamilton East).]

referred to or having based his decision on material which was turned over to him by the Minister of Justice on April 29, 1975, should let us see that material. I submit we are entitled to have it tabled in the House.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. My understanding of the citation is similar to that expressed by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre in his first argument. He referred to Beauchesne and argued that when a minister has quoted from a statement, he must table it. This is similar to the rule applying in a court of law. According to that rule, a document which is cited must be filed. That is not an equation; it is a similarity. In a court of law, the rule is that the document which has been cited must be filed by counsel who quoted from it. In the House of Commons, the rule is that when a minister quotes from a document, he must table it. But the minister has not quoted from a document, although he made extensive references to it.

Unless I can be persuaded otherwise, it seems to me that an application should be made when the Minister of Justice is in the House for the tabling of these documents. I bring forward this argument so that hon. members may be forewarned and prepared to argue the point more extensively if it is raised when the Minister of Justice is in the House. At this time I would not, on the basis of the present argument, compel the Minister of Labour to table the document because he has not quoted from it. However, I leave the matter open for argument for when the Minister of Justice is in the House. The document was offered by that minister. If the hon. member wishes to raise the point at another time when the Minister of Justice is in the House, it can be argued more fully at that time.

[Translation]

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to extend this discussion on the inquiry which has been announced by the hon. Minister of Labour (Mr. Munro). However, I would like to ask him three very precise questions, and I am satisfied that he will give proper answers.

When an inquiry is launched, it is because there are hidden facts which the public and Parliament must be made aware of. This is the reason for an inquiry. Then, I should believe that we will have a real inquiry, a thorough study and not a superficial inquiry.

Will the investigators have all the necessary powers to order public servants, employees of Seafarers' Union and also federal government employees, to appear and to make sworn statements?

Will there be an in-depth study in order to find out where the control the Seafarers' Union really lies, and whether financial contributions have been made to the electoral fund of any political party over the last few years and which might have interfered with the freedom of some members of parliament?

Will the inquiry commissioners be allowed to call the Minister of Labour as a witness, and in the affirmative, will the minister agree to appear?

Those are the three questions to which I should like to get an answer, in order to satisfy a little the needs of parliamentarians and of the Canadian people as a whole.