

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): I was listening to the minister with care, Madam Speaker. I have not yet been able to determine from *Hansard* my question concerning this subject. I am quite prepared to accept the minister's claim that he was not in Toronto. As I recall, I did not say that he was in Toronto. If I did say it, I take it back. I was taking a quote from the *Toronto Star* for Monday, which is surely the essential point.

What I think would be useful in terms of the substantive issue of rent controls, which presumably the minister responsible for housing is interested in, is whether he is now telling the House that he does not favour abolition of rent controls. Will he make it very clear what the government's position is with respect to that issue?

Madam Speaker: No, I do not think I will allow the hon. minister to reply. This question is obviously not a breach of the privileges of the House. The statements were made outside the House and there is a different interpretation as to those statements. The minister has made his point, as has the hon. member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent). I think the matter should be closed.

MR. SKELLY—QUESTION RESPECTING COMPETITION POLICY

Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox-Powell River): Madam Speaker, I did send you a note concerning a question of privilege arising out of today's proceedings. I believe the situation resulted from questions to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ouellet) and the responses of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde). I think it was a matter of misleading through inadvertence or misunderstanding.

● (1540)

My question basically asked the minister to explain why the president of Imperial Oil had been placed on a board that was advising the government on competition policy, and he said they had not. I have submitted to you two documents which show that William O. Twaits was a member of a committee which provided advice. The recent report says that that was one of the central documents in influencing competition policy. So I think that was a misunderstanding, and if the minister would confirm that the president of Imperial Oil was there it would clear it up. The point was that the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs knew of the role of Imperial Oil in this matter prior to this situation.

Then somewhere out of the machine dropped the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, and I think his statement was also misleading by misunderstanding the question. My questions were directed strictly to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. His officials have been aware since 1973 that Imperial Oil was a prime mover in this investigation, of bilking the Canadian public. However, the document, which the minister denied wholeheartedly, on page 33 indicates there were several documents in the possession of the government in which Imperial Oil has been asked by the National Energy

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Board and the government to provide confidential information on such matters as licence restrictions and energy policy.

The minister certainly misunderstood my question; but if you find that I have a point of privilege, I would like some clarification to confirm that the president of Imperial Oil, after the investigation began, was asked to sit on a committee advising the government on competition policy, and that Imperial Oil, years after the investigation commenced, provided special advice, as the report puts it, on confidential energy policy. This is a matter of record, and either the ministers are right or the people who investigated the matter are wrong. If you could find my privilege, Madam Speaker, I would appreciate clarification of these two points.

Madam Speaker: After listening to the hon. member, I do not think there is a privilege in the question he is now raising. It is clearly a different way of interpreting a report. The hon. member is not satisfied with the kind of answer he received from the minister, but the Chair has no way to redress a situation when one member is not happy with an answer that he has received from another member. The proper way to pursue the hon. member's concern is to continue his questioning during question period, or at other times, to get clarification from the hon. ministers to the questions to which he is seeking answers.

[Translation]

Mr. Ouellet: Madam Speaker, on the point of order—

Madam Speaker: I am willing to recognize the hon. minister, but I was looking at him in a certain way so that he would realize that he cannot go on discussing the question of privilege. If he rises on a point of order, I am willing to accept that, but I have already made my ruling. I did not realize that the minister might want to reply, but because this is clearly a debate, there therefore is no question of privilege.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S.O. 26

REPORT ON STATE OF COMPETITION IN THE CANADIAN PETROLEUM INDUSTRY

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, I ask leave, seconded by the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell), to move the adjournment of the House under Standing Order 26 for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter requiring urgent consideration, namely, the release yesterday by the Director of Investigation and Research under the combines investigation branch of the report on the state of competition in the Canadian petroleum industry, and its revelation of shocking evidence of price gouging of the Canadian consumer, costing each Canadian