

Point of Order—Mr. McGrath

when I really should have said 28,000 or 38,000; he quibbles about matters of this sort.

The fact is that we are open as a department and matters of very great breadth are available to hon. members. The discomfort of hon. members opposite arises because, while they purport to be transport critics, they obviously did not know, over the years, that this material was there.

Mr. Speaker: Order. By defending his answer, referring to it again and indicating that he stands by it, the minister, of course, takes this out of the area of procedure and leads it into an area of disagreement where it remains at this time. I have to set this matter aside as a question of privilege.

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POINT OF ORDER

MR. McGRATH—DENIAL OF MISREPRESENTATION OF STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF CONSUMER AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, I did not raise this matter yesterday because the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Allmand) had left the House. In any event I wanted to check the record. What the hon. gentleman said yesterday did not constitute grounds for raising a question of privilege because it was not unparliamentary. Nevertheless, it was a serious charge. I regret the minister is not in his place this afternoon.

In reply to my question, which can be found reported at page 3345 of *Hansard*, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs said this:

I never said food prices would go up by 14 per cent in a few months; I said the increase would be from 12 per cent to 14 per cent, year over year, in the next few months and 9 per cent to 10 per cent for the total year at the end of the year. That is a very gross misrepresentation, which is not unusual for the hon. member.

As I say, I consider that to be a serious charge. "Gross misrepresentation" may not give rise to a question of privilege but it does imply disorder, as I think Your Honour will agree. I checked out my source for making the statement I did in my question to the minister and I found it in the speech the minister made to the Consumers' Association of Manitoba last week. This is on page 12 of the speech:

I consider, however, that much of the improvement will not come until the latter part of the year and for the next few months we can, unfortunately, expect to see increases in food prices of between 12 and 14 per cent.

● (1520)

That is the end of the quotation, Mr. Speaker. Obviously I did not misrepresent what the minister had said. It was not a misrepresentation or a gross misrepresentation. I am sorry the minister is not here because I know he is a fair person and would want to correct the record if he was present.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Obviously the matter should now be left for the minister to direct his attention to the intervention by the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr.

[Mr. Larg.]

McGrath). I am sure he will do that and will indicate whether he wishes to dispute it further.

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, if I might speak briefly in respect of the taking of my question of privilege under advisement—

An hon. Member: No, it is finished.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) has defended his answer in the House today which takes this matter out of the realm of privilege and places it in the position of a matter of disagreement. Once a minister stands in his place and says he stands by his answer, although the hon. member obviously disagrees, he has defended his answer and is saying to the House it should look at the record, and what was said ought to be interpreted in such a way as to lead to an innocent conclusion, which places the matter, as I have said, as a matter of interpretation or disagreement between the parties, and in my opinion, takes the matter out of the category of a question of privilege.

Mr. McKenzie: Could I put a further question? I reserve the right to proceed with this matter as a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member may reserve the right to do a number of other things. He certainly has no right to proceed with that matter any further. I have adjudicated on it and I cannot change my adjudication. If the hon. member thinks that as a result of some intervention in this debate he has some additional matter to pursue, that may very well be the case. I do not know that.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

REGULATIONS AND OTHER STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

CONCURRENCE IN FIFTH REPORT OF STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE

On the Order: Motions:

February 16, 1979—Mr. Baldwin (Joint Chairman of the Standing Joint Committee on Regulations and Other Statutory Instruments):

That the Fifth Report of the Standing Joint Committee on Regulations and Other Statutory Instruments, presented to the House on Friday, February 16, 1979, be concurred in.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, may I discuss this briefly as a point of order in the hope that it might save some time of the House. I am not actually moving the motion at this time. It is a motion in my name as co-chairman of the Standing Joint Committee on Regulations and Other Statutory Instruments to concur in a unanimous report. It was agreed to by members from all sides of the House. I believe it