

Brisco) is a serious one, as was the previous question of privilege and as will be, I am sure, the following one. It is a matter of some concern that these questions have to be raised. I have given a preliminary view of what I feel is the correct interpretation of our Standing Orders with regard to these questions. However, I believe that any member who takes time to give the Chair notice of a question of privilege for the purpose of raising a serious point ought to be given the attention of the House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brisco: I will be very brief, Mr. Speaker. I continue the quotation from the *Toronto Star* of Tuesday, March 11:

Danson made the admission after the *Star* obtained a copy of a "personal and confidential" letter he sent last month to all Liberal MP's asking them to be quick when invited to recommend a lawyer to handle a mortgage from the federal corporation.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Brisco: As matters stand at the present, we are subjected to direct contradiction of that policy. Surely, Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of all members and the people that we serve, some vehicle must be developed that will oblige members of parliament, particularly ministers, to make statements of fact in the House of Commons that will not be in conflict with statements made later outside the House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, if I may quote the hon. member's question of March 10, he said:

Has the minister written a letter or letters to Liberal members of Parliament or Liberal party members asking for the name or names of lawyers in the respective constituencies who support the Liberal party with a view to awarding CMHC mortgage business to these party supporters who belong to the legal profession?

I would not even bother rising to speak on this question of privilege except the hon. member suggested I was flirting with the truth and made statements outside the House different from inside the House. The import of his question was that I asked members for names of those who were party supporters. That is not the case. I asked for the names of legal agents—

Mr. Fairweather: Did you ask anybody on this side of the House? No!

An hon. Member: Who did you ask?

Mr. Danson: The hon. member's question of privilege, as I understand it, is based on the assertion that I did not answer accurately in the House. I did answer accurately in the House. I answered further questions outside. There was no suggestion regarding party supporters—simply the names of those qualified to handle this business. I have received suggestions from all sides of the House—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Danson:—and they have been given due consideration. I find it a strange coincidence in this country that the best lawyers to handle this work in Ontario happen to

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be Conservatives, the best in British Columbia are NDP and the best on the national scale, as always, are Liberals.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The facts surrounding the question of privilege of which the Chair has given notice by the hon. member for Kootenay West are not dissimilar, basically, from those referred to by the hon. member for Hamilton West, and neither is the decision of the Chair.

MR. REYNOLDS—ANSWERS OF SOLICITOR GENERAL CONCERNING INVESTIGATION OF DREDGING CONTRACTS

Mr. John Reynolds (Burnaby-Richmond-Delta): Mr. Speaker, my question of privilege relates to the same subject as was raised by the hon. member for Hamilton West, that is to say, the investigations being carried out in British Columbia and the answers the Solicitor General gave us on February 27 and March 7. In order to save the time of the House, having regard to your two previous rulings, Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw my question of privilege; I am sure that in the long run the people of Canada will get the answers to this sorry mess as the people of the United States did when they had the Water-gate investigation.

Some hon. Members: Oh!

An hon. Member: Cheap!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CANADIAN POSITION ON JURISDICTION OVER COASTAL WATERS AT LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE—REQUEST FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO MOVE MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Walter C. Carter (St. John's West): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity under the provisions of Standing Order 43. The Law of the Sea Conference is to take place in Geneva on March 17, 1975. Accordingly, I would move that the following motion be presented to all delegates at the conference in order to reaffirm the Canadian position on this issue, namely:

That this House accept the principle that Canada and other coastal states own the fishery resources on and over their respective continental shelves and slopes, that the management of the fishery resources is the responsibility of the coastal states, that other states may fish such resources only with the permission of the coastal state, and, further, this House agrees that in implementation of this policy Canada must provide adequate surveillance so that swift action can be taken when Canadian interests are threatened or violated.

● (1430)

Mr. Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. It being proposed pursuant to Standing Order 43 it cannot be debated without unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?