

All of that is quite correct activity, but it is clear, and I must once again enforce the rule, that questions put to ministers during the question period, and statements made by ministers and questions put to them upon the making of statements within the rules under which we presently operate must be entirely connected with their present ministerial administrative responsibility.

Mr. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the ruling you have just made. It occurs to me that in the course of your statement you dealt with a problem which has plagued us in this House, that of a minister, outside the House, making direct reference to and castigation of the department he has nothing further to do with, as was the case with the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

● (1212)

In view of the constraints which Your Honour has placed upon us in asking questions in this House, and in view of the fact that I know the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs was anxious, and indeed has the responsibility, to stand in the House and clarify, if that is possible, his smear against the RCMP which he made outside the House, I would ask Your Honour if this is not the appropriate point at which the House might give unanimous consent to allow members of the House, particularly members of the opposition, the next time we meet in the question period to ask questions of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs directly relating to his accusation made outside the House against members of the RCMP, and the fact that they were not forthcoming with information to him while he was minister, including his predecessor and successor in office.

Mr. Speaker: I thought I covered the possibility of unanimous consent. If the Chair is presented with unanimous consent as a *fait accompli*, I will attempt to deal with it.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

FISHERIES

TABLING OF ANNUAL REPORT OF CANADIAN SALTFISH CORPORATION

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and the Environment): Mr. Speaker, under the provisions of Standing Order 41, I wish to table, in both official languages, the annual report of the Canadian Saltfish Corporation for the fiscal year 1976-77, pursuant to section 32 of the Saltfish Act.

While I am on my feet, there have been some conversations with members opposite, and with the consent of the House I should like to move that the document be referred to the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry.

Fisheries

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Having tabled the document, the minister indicates that there may be some disposition in the House, with consent, to move now to refer the document to the standing committee. Is that the disposition of the House?

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Agreed.

Mr. Knowles: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed. It is therefore moved by the Minister of Fisheries and the Environment:

That the annual report for 1976-77 of the Canadian Saltfish Corporation be referred to the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order following upon the point of order raised by my colleague from Saskatoon-Biggar, and naturally I shall accept the direction of the Chair as to the procedure to be followed here. However, bearing in mind that the House has just given unanimous consent for the tabling of a document by the Minister of Fisheries and the Environment, and following whatever procedure is appropriate, I should like to ask Your Honour to instruct me as to how we might seek now from the House of Commons unanimous consent to permit the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs to make a statement on motions at the next sitting of the House on Monday, which would allow him to state in the House of Commons the allegations and charges which he made against the RCMP outside the House of Commons.

As is the case normally with a statement on motions, this would allow members of the official opposition, and perhaps some of his own colleagues, to ask him questions to determine precisely what it was he said and precisely what it is he means to convey in regard to the withholding of information from him, as minister, on the part of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

If it is appropriate, I should now like to ask for unanimous consent of the House to allow the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs to make a statement on motions in the House on Monday covering the charges that he made against the Royal Canadian Mounted Police outside the House.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The reference I made to unanimous consent as a *fait accompli* is one which I have made in the past. Frankly, I think it is practical—I say practical, but not absolutely necessary—that rather than another member asking for unanimous consent to permit something to be done, the request, if it is going to be put before the House, ought to originate with the member who wishes that something be done which is prevented by the rules from being done. If I were to put the question whenever one member sought unanimous consent for some other member to do something, I think we would continually be stopping the proceedings of the House. I endeavoured to say indirectly during the course of my ruling, as has been the case in the past, that if one faces a situation of