

Point of Order—Mr. Riis

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): 1. In 1986, according to Statistics Canada, \$5.9 million of chrome (of which \$4.7 million was ferrochrome), and \$5.4 million worth of platinum was imported into Canada from South Africa. No South African magnesium was imported into Canada. Under the relevant provisions of the Customs Act and because of the proprietary nature of the information involved it is not possible to divulge the names of the companies concerned.

2. At the present time no sanctions exist or are proposed against imports of South African chrome, platinum or magnesium.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: The question enumerated by the Hon. Minister has been answered.

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QUESTION PASSED AS ORDER FOR RETURN

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of State and Minister of State (Treasury Board)): Mr. Speaker, if question No. 159 could be made an Order for Return, the return would be tabled immediately.

Mr. Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

[Text]

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, MINES AND RESOURCES—GRANTS
TO METROPOLITAN TORONTO AREA

Question No. 159—**Mr. Redway:**

Since September 4, 1984, did the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources make grants and/or loans to persons or corporations, non-governmental organizations and governments within Metropolitan Toronto and, if so, in each case, in what amount and for what purpose?

Return tabled.

[English]

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

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POINT OF ORDER

COMPLIANCE WITH S. O. 13(2)—EXTENSION OF BELLS

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a very short point of order on which I would like to seek some guidance from the Chair. It is with regard to the situation which arose late in the day yesterday. Members of

the House had been informed earlier in the day that there would be a vote called at six o'clock as per the Standing Orders. The Standing Orders provide for a 15-minute bell in that case.

I would like to make the point that Members of Parliament work not only in the House of Commons giving presentations and voting at the appropriate time, but also carry on their responsibilities and duties in standing, special and joint committees as well as carrying out their regular responsibilities as Members of Parliament. In order to do that effectively it is important that Members have the opportunity to schedule their day's events.

This is not an earth-shattering situation and I do not want to suggest that it is. However, we have Standing Orders so that we can understand what we are doing here. The reform committee which studied this matter for a considerable length of time made its recommendations in order to facilitate the business of the House of Commons so that Members of the House would have a clear understanding of what was transpiring at any time.

I draw this to your attention, Mr. Speaker, because you were conducting business elsewhere at the pertinent time last night. I thought it would be appropriate for you to make a comment at the appropriate time. Members were assembled at the appropriate time for the vote and five minutes passed and then 10 minutes and then 15 minutes. It is understandable that Members of Parliament became concerned. After the vote a number of people asked me, as House Leader of the New Democrats, why we waited for so long.

As I say, Mr. Speaker, this is not the most important event in Canada today, but if we are going to facilitate the business of the House and take it seriously, it is important that rules, regulations, conventions and traditions be followed unless there is good reason to depart from them after discussion and concurrence of the Parties involved. I draw that to your attention, Mr. Speaker, to reflect the view of my Party that there was concern that the business and planning of a number of Members in my caucus, and I suspect in all caucuses, was disrupted yesterday. At the appropriate time I would appreciate a comment from the Chair on this matter.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. There is more than a question of orderly business involved in this matter; it becomes, at a certain point, a matter of discipline. If there is a 15-minute bell it means that Parties should be able to produce their respective votes at the end of the 15 minutes. When a longer period of time is allotted, in this case to the Government because the Government Whip, as I understand it, was not present, it perhaps means that the Government is not ready for the vote at the end of the 15 minutes. As it was a 15-minute bell, the question should have been put without the Government being ready for it. Otherwise, what would be the point of insisting that the bell be limited to 15 minutes and that the vote take place thereafter?