

Point of Order—Mr. Kaplan

to test the answer he gave to the first question in my supplementary question because he had not answered questions we had put to him previously. I do not understand how you, Mr. Speaker, could say that that second question was not supplementary to the first which had to do with the Prime Minister's attitude with respect to questions in this House relating to matters about which he can only answer.

I would like you, Mr. Speaker, to explain to me in the House how you ruled that that second question was not supplementary to the first?

An Hon. Member: You don't question rulings.

Mr. Speaker: It appeared to me that the question which was being put as a supplementary question was not a supplementary question.

REQUEST FOR TABLING OF DOCUMENT

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, during the Question Period the Prime Minister quoted at length from a letter of the former Prime Minister, the Right Hon. Pierre Trudeau. I would like to ask that the letter be tabled in accordance with the usual practice.

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I am not one to peer over the Prime Minister's shoulder, but that was a separate document altogether, with an extract. It was not a letter.

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): Well, then, table that.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I saw, as the Speaker, the Prime Minister referring to a document.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: It was not a letter.

Mr. Speaker: I am prepared to reserve with respect to the "blues", but the question has been put as a point of order and relates to the rules in Beauchesne with regard to the tabling of a document which is referred to in the House. However, I am prepared to reserve and look at the "blues".

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, I think that there is clear precedent with respect to the types of documents which should be tabled, and they are of an official nature, clearly, to start with. I would like to have an opportunity of addressing this matter so we can have a precise ruling. If an Hon. Member, for example, brings in a set of notes from which to refresh his memory, with an extract from another document, I hardly think that that is the kind of document which would be contemplated by Beauchesne, or under our rules. But I would like to address that whole question at a subsequent time.

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) said that he was quoting from a letter from a former Prime Minister. He gave the date. In accordance with the rules of this house that letter should be tabled now so we can see the total relevance.

Also, through you, Mr. Speaker, to the House Leader, I would ask if the Prime Minister would also inform us whether he has discussed with the Clerk of the Privy Council whether it is in order to table a letter from a Prime Minister of a former administration.

Mr. Speaker: The second half of that document creates a greater difficulty for me. I take it the Hon. President of the Privy Council (Mr. Hnatyshyn) is asking me to defer making a decision so that he can prepare an argument. I have heard a case put with regard to the citation which claims that a statement was made in Question Period in which a letter was quoted. The only way that I know of that I can test that is to wait until I see the "blues". I think perhaps, in the circumstances, all I can do is to wait to read the "blues", but I am open to representations on that, I suppose.

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, I would like to give notice now that if you hear argument on this point from the Government House Leader, I intend to offer an argument on the same matter, with your permission.

Mr. Speaker: I accept that as well.

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member has not finished his point of order?

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, I was misled by what was said into believing that there was a letter from which the Prime Minister was reading. If he was reading from a document, I want my request to apply to that document from which he was reading, letter or not.

Mr. Speaker: I accept that. I think that under the circumstances I will have to reserve and try to determine what was said in Question Period, whether there was a reference made, on the understanding that both House Leaders will make representations.

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, the document was quoted today. It is that document we want to see. It is not a document which may be produced tomorrow. The rules are very clear. You have said that yourself, Mr. Speaker. I would rather that you do not, Mr. Speaker, go and see the "blues" which will be published within an hour or two. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) has left the House, and that is his privilege. He probably left with the document, but it is that document we want to see. When someone refers to a document in this House, he has to produce the document, if a request is made. We do not see why we should wait until tomorrow to see the document. It is that document we want to see.

Mr. Speaker: I understand the point that the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) is making. Since, I take it, the document has left the House, or the letter or whatever it is, I do not think it makes any difference at this moment whether I reserve my ruling until I review the video tape because, I