

Security Intelligence Service

at this time to make a ruling on that point. It is my understanding that a ruling may not be available before the end of debate today. It certainly will be in the Speaker's hands by tomorrow.

Mr. Lambert: Mr. Speaker, I then reserve my position possibly to address additional arguments to Mr. Speaker. I am aware of additional arguments. I raised the matter initially. I find frankly that the whole situation is unsatisfactory.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair makes good note of the Hon. Member's comments. The Hon. Member for Lanark-Renfrew Carleton (Mr. Dick) is rising on the same point of order?

Mr. Dick: Yes, Mr. Speaker. It is unreasonable to take an hour and 20 minutes to find out whether something has been printed. I went to General Distribution, which is the place at which all things printed are dispersed, and I found out that the minutes of the three sittings, sitting No. 38 of June 7, sitting No. 39 of June 7, sitting No. 40 of June 7, and sitting No. 41 of June 8, 1984, have not been printed. The evidence is not available. There is some discussion as to whether the evidence may be in rough draft form. I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that if it is in rough draft form, it will appear in the language spoken in the committee. It will not be translated and, not being translated, it will not be acceptable in this House. Therefore, it is clear that the evidence given before the committee is not available and I cannot see how we can proceed.

An hour and twenty minutes is more than adequate. Could you make a ruling on that, Sir?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I would not, of course, want to comment on the specifics of the Hon. Member's point at this time except to say that I accept as a fact the statement he has just made. But out of that there is still left the matter of preparing or writing and editing a ruling, and that is the matter pending at this time, as I understand it.

The Hon. Member for Regina East (Mr. de Jong) is rising on the same point of order?

Mr. de Jong: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to reiterate what the two previous speakers, who brought up this point of order, have said about the Government's being remiss in introducing legislation when all the records are not available. I was not a member of the committee. I certainly want to participate in this debate. I wish to have the opportunity to review the records of the committee, the testimony, the questions and the reasoning why the Government is in favour of some clauses and against other clauses in order to prepare my submission. We certainly have not heard from any government Members. I am very anxious to know what their reasoning is. Without having the transcripts available to me, I cannot prepare myself in an intelligent way to participate in this debate. I would urge you, Sir, to ensure that those transcripts are made available to all Members as soon as possible.

Mr. Robinson (Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. I think there is an additional difficulty which

has not yet been noted. The committee was sitting, in effect, morning, noon and night under very strict time guidelines. It has dealt with a very large number of clauses during the days for which proceedings are not yet printed. As I understand it, this would seriously impair the ability of Members to address the issues that arise adequately. As I indicated, there may very well be the raw proceedings. They have not been translated. The Hon. Member for Lévis (Mr. Gourde) was sleeping during much of the proceedings. I know he would want to have an opportunity to review those proceedings. I would hope that in the very, very near future we might have an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to have these very important minutes of the proceedings translated and properly transcribed.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make one or two observations with respect to the matter raised by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert), a former Speaker of the House of Commons and a distinguished parliamentarian of long standing. He is held in high regard by all of us. He has made, I think, a very valid point of order with respect to the ability of this House to carry out its responsibilities and a matter of privilege to him to carry out his responsibilities as a Member of Parliament.

I simply want to lend my support to the position the Hon. Member for Edmonton West has taken, particularly in light of the fact that, as we will learn by reading the transcript, there was an unusual precedent established, which I do not accept, in the arbitrary ruling of the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs in which he unilaterally imposed time allocation on the deliberations and debate. In order for us to discuss this matter of such serious consequence to Canadians generally on the floor of the House of Commons we should not have closure. It underlines the fact that, under whatever guise—and I do not speak of the motivation of the Chairman, who is an honourable and distinguished Member of this House—closure under any name is regrettable. It is an attempt to thwart free and unfettered discussion on a Bill, particularly one relating to national security. This is unacceptable in a free and democratic society. These matters have occurred during the course of debate, and my colleague from Edmonton West has rightly demanded that we have in our possession all records so that we may address this subject in terms of the legislation itself and with respect to some of the amendments proposed by way of motion by members of both opposition Parties.

I do not want to take up any more time of the House except to say that I firmly and unequivocally support the very germane point raised by my colleague from Edmonton West. I hope this matter will be rectified before the debate resumes on this legislation sometime tomorrow.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please, it being 5 p.m. the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on the Order Paper.