

Point of Order

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, at one time I believe the hon. member was a minister of the Crown and he followed the practice of occasionally referring to notes. He knows that the practices of Parliament, which he has just cited, are practices which apply to documents which were quoted but not from notes for Question Period. He knows that.

The Speaker, quite properly, suggested that I should lay upon the table the Amnesty International document from which I had quoted, and I am very pleased to do that. I hope many Canadians will read that document in detail, so that they will understand what Saddam Hussein is doing to Kuwait.

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, it is regrettable that the minister did not bring the documents to the House from which he is citing. Considering the importance of this basic debate about the validity of sanctions, will the minister be prepared to table in this House, and make public the documents from which he drew the information and presented to the House today?

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure about the propriety of this exchange but I am, as always, in your hands. I made a commitment to the standing committee that I would make available to the standing committee a great deal of information. I did that orally when I was there to answer questions.

I told the hon. member, who was present and, through him and through members of the committee, the whole House that I was prepared to make available briefings on a confidential basis of other matters that should perhaps not be put for valid reasons, in a situation such as the present situation, in the public domain. That follows the long, unvaried traditions of Parliament.

The hon. member asks me to repeat the undertaking I gave in the standing committee; of course, I do that. And I am prepared to give him access, in his capacity as a Privy Councillor with all of the obligations that involves, to information with respect to the effectiveness of sanctions. I also repeat my request to him. If he has any information suggesting that sanctions work, let him present that to the people of Canada.

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, the Secretary of State for External Affairs cannot be half in and half out on this matter. If he has information on

sanctions, he has to table the document he was quoting from and give us the sources. Otherwise there will be a question as to his credibility and the credibility of the government on this important—

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members know what the rule is with respect to tabling documents. As I saw it, the right hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs was reading from the report. I suggested that it was appropriate to table it. He has done that.

If there are other matters that need to be discussed, perhaps they could be raised at another occasion, after there has been some discussion. This is now turning into debate and I think we have to close it off.

The hon. member for Yukon.

Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I was also going to request that the minister for external affairs table the document which he cited in his answer to my question.

I am pleased that the members of the opposition have continued to pursue that question as well.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, on this point, to be very precise, I was not at that point quoting from a document. I was referring to notes.

We do have assessments available. I shared them with the standing committee when I appeared at an earlier time in this debate. I am prepared to share that information again with Parliament. There is not a document as the hon. member is talking about. There are my speaking notes to which ministers habitually refer, but I am certainly prepared to make any document available on the basis that I outlined in the committee. That basis was that those that can be made available publicly will be made available to the committee. Those that require people to be sworn to an oath will be made available to members of the Privy Council.

That is one of the reasons why the government was so pleased that the hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party was prepared to accept a swearing to the Privy Council, because it allows someone in her party now—

Mr. Speaker: The difficulty of the Chair is that this is leading into a debate. However, hon. members have raised the matter. The right hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs has indicated his willingness to co-operate and it is now my duty to continue with Routine Proceedings.