

Point of Order—Mr. Prud'homme

Mr. Axworthy: At least it makes a change.

Mr. Taylor: Why did you sneak it in on Private Members' day? It was a dirty trick.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Some Hon. Members have indicated that at least it is a change. I agree. However, I do not think I should recognize other Hon. Members if what they want to do is to contribute to debate. The point of order is—

[*Translation*]

—a point of order—

[*English*]

—an appeal to the regulations of the House. I will recognize Hon. Members but I would ask them to stay within those limits.

Mr. Anguish: Mr. Speaker, I did not catch what you said at the end, but I would like to say, on the same point of order, that it is not a hijacking of Parliament, and it has been the New Democratic Party—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Order, please. What I was attempting to say to all Hon. Members is that a legitimate point of order has been raised as to how petitions are to be seen, how they are to be reviewed, what are the responsibilities of the officers at the Table and the people in the Chair. Those points of order which refer to issues on the Crow Bill or anything of that nature are not legitimate points of order. I would ask Hon. Members to stay within the limit of the matter of petitions and how they are dealt with.

Mr. Anguish: What I intend to address exactly, Mr. Speaker, is the point of order concerning petitions and the form and relevancy of them. First of all, I would like to point out that there is an urgency in presenting petitions because many of the petitions I have received deal with pieces of legislation which are possibly before Parliament. We all know that this session of Parliament is coming to an end very soon and that the Government wants to start a new session. Therefore, these petitions from my own constituents and from constituents all across Canada, which have been sent to us, need to be presented at this time because they will not be relevant after the new session of Parliament begins, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Order, please. There is no dispute as to the urgency, in the view of the Hon. Members of the House of Commons or anyone else. The only issue is the form. I might simply indicate that the responsibility of the Chair and of the Table is to establish that any given petition is acceptable in its form. I feel, perhaps, that the issue has been sufficiently ventilated. However, I understand that the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis wants to look further into it. I would reserve his right to do that and to pursue the matter further if he so wishes. No one is disputing whether or not these petitions are urgent.

Mr. Pinard: I rise on a point of order. I just want to confirm very clearly that the order of the day on Monday will be Bill

C-155. I mention that now because I feel it is important that the Opposition Members do not find some other pretext on Monday to try to waste the time of the House, like it did yesterday and today, when the Government is attempting to create hundreds of thousands of jobs in Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Axworthy: It hurts, does it not?

An Hon. Member: Is that a point of order, Mr. Speaker?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Partly.

Mr. Anguish: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, if the Government is creating hundreds of thousands of jobs I would like to know what it is doing to create these hundreds of thousands of jobs. The way we see the present legislation—

Mr. Axworthy: Order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Order.

Mr. Prud'homme: Mr. Speaker, you know I have been an Hon. Member of the House for 20 years. That is the reason my approach to this debate is more kind than partisan, in my view. I would just like to remind Hon. Members of the rules. After reading them a little more I am afraid that the rules are much more severe than I expected, even though I thought I knew them well. With all kindness to my colleagues who are at the moment presenting petitions—and I am not singling one out in particular at this time—I reserve my right to look at all petitions which were introduced this week. However, I already have one in my hand which, as I said, *prima facie*, appears to be signed by the same person for many names.

An Hon. Member: Shame.

Mr. Prud'homme: I do not want to say "shame" as my good friend and neighbour did. I would like to remind my colleagues that it is not the duty of the Table officers to check if the names are the same or are a reproduction. It is their duty to receive the petitions.

● (1540)

I will read, without comment at this time, from the Nineteenth Edition of Erskine May, at page 141. The heading is:

Presenting Forged, Falsified or Fabricated Documents to Either House or Committees of Either House.

Mr. Benjamin: You had better put your name on the line here.

Mr. Prud'homme: I am reminding Members—

Mr. Benjamin: Careful.

Mr. Prud'homme: I am more careful than you think.

Mr. Benjamin: Are you accusing anyone?