

Point of Order—Mr. McKinnon

McCurdy) varies quite considerably from the language used by the Hon. Member when he presented it. I was unable to raise a point at that time, although I was skeptical about the wording he was using, because I was unable to get a copy of the petition which I now have. I want to point out that according to the electronic transcript, the Member said: "The petitioners protest as well the fact that this legislation is a product of American blackmail". Very close examination of the petition gives no indication whatsoever that the petitioners said any such thing, and I believe that the Hon. Member has probably unwittingly misled the House and misrepresented his petitioners. I would ask if the Speaker would be kind enough to review the "blues" and tomorrow's *Hansard*, and the petition, to see what representation we should make and what we should do in the way of ensuring honesty and courtesy in the House.

• (1510)

Mr. Doug Lewis (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. At the same time as you are examining the petition presented by the Hon. Member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr. McCurdy) and the wording therein and the words he used in presenting the petition, I would also draw your attention to the words used by the Hon. Member for Spadina (Mr. Heap) who stated very clearly, according to the "blues": "They point out that it bears particularly upon the aged and infirm and upon any who needs drugs on an ongoing basis and that the profits will go primarily to the United States and not Canada". I have examined the petition, the wording of these petitions all being the same, and those words are not contained in that petition.

Mr. Keeper: They are not all the same.

Mr. Lewis: We have not had a chance to get all of them and I say with specific reference to the Hon. Member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Keeper), that when he presented his petition he said very clearly: "The petitioners point out that the Government has caved in to the lobbying of multinational corporations". That is not in the wording of the said petition. I would ask you to examine that as well.

Now we go to the petition presented by the Member for Comox—Powell River (Mr. Skelly) who has recently returned to the House from an unfortunate experience in British Columbia. He says: "The petition states that it is on the subject of the Government proposal to harm severely senior citizens—". That is not in the petition: "—and many other Canadians by providing for unlimited increases in drug prices". Those words are not in the petition either. He goes on to take a shot at my colleague, the Hon. Member for Cariboo—Chilcotin (Mr. Greenaway), and says the people of that riding are outraged. Those words are not in the petition either.

There is nothing more basic to our democratic tradition than presenting a petition from the people of the country. For a Member of Parliament to get up in the House and misrepresent deliberately or unwittingly what petitioners say in writing

is an absolute outrage. I would ask that you examine what was said on flights of fancy and compare it to what is very clearly written and brought forward by the petitioners. If you find, as I have, that there has been a complete variance, I would ask and suggest that it is appropriate that those Members apologize to the House.

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. It is interesting that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Government House Leader (Mr. Lewis) should be getting up again to try to stall, prevent and thwart the wishes of Members of Parliament who wish to present petitions to the House.

Mr. Mazankowski: We are trying to hold you guys accountable.

Mr. Murphy: It was interesting that before the lunch break the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) was trying to insinuate that he should have prior access to all petitions that are presented in the House.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. That is absolutely incorrect. All I asked, and all I sought—and you were in the chair—was to look at the petitions which were to be deposited on the Table.

Mr. Keeper: No, you did not.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The point that is being debated here, to which the Chair must address its attention, is whether Members, at the introduction of their petitions, went beyond what in fact was the substance of the petitions when describing those petitions. I would ask Hon. Members, all of whom have the right to make a contribution in this debate, to confine their remarks to that issue.

That is the issue with which the Chair must deal. Certainly the Chair is not assisted by Members wandering away from that particular central point. The Hon. Member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy).

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Speaker, in his point of order the Parliamentary Secretary talked about a number of clauses and other concerns. He said that the petition itself does not mention pensioners. That may be true, but the petition does say that the measure will unfairly hurt those Canadians whose health needs require the purchase of prescription drugs on an ongoing basis. I submit that many people across this country to whom this applies are indeed pensioners. I know for a fact that the people who signed the petition that I presented in the House were pensioners from my riding. An Hon. Member certainly has the right to rise in the House and say he is speaking on behalf of pensioners.

The Parliamentary Secretary said that we were referring to blackmail by the United States. That may be a term which he finds offensive, but the petition itself states: "The proposed changes are another example of Canadian Government concessions to the United States, at the expense of average Canadians, in the free trade negotiations".