

*Point of Order—Mr. Hnatyshyn**[Translation]*

Hon. Pierre De Bané (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I think my hon. friend is aware of the efforts being made by the Department to defend the interests of our fishermen on the Pacific coast.

* * *

*[English]***PETITION**

MR. THACKER—EXTENSION OF HOURS AT PORTS OF ENTRY

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the petition presented by the Hon. Member for Lethbridge-Foothills (Mr. Thacker) on Thursday, May 17, 1984, meets the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

* * *

POINT OF ORDER

MR. HNATYSHYN—MOTION TO REFER "NEW CANADIAN AIR POLICY" TO TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I will be very brief. I would like to refer to the motion which was presented by the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Evans) yesterday, which was moved by unanimous consent and, indeed, received the consent of the House. I acknowledge that there was unanimous consent and that the motion was in proper form; there is no difficulty in that respect. The advice I received from our representatives on the committee was that, in their wisdom, they decided that that would be the form in which the motion would be posed.

It was brought to my attention this morning that there is an unusual provision in this particular motion, and I would like to raise it with Your Honour. I think for a variety of reasons it compromises—and it could so compromise if it were a precedent—the activities of parliamentary committees. I refer Your Honour to the provision following paragraph 6 of the motion in which it states:

That the Committee have the power to retain the services of expert, professional, technical and clerical staff as may be deemed necessary and after approval by the Clerk of the House of Commons—

Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge that is a novel proposition in terms of the method in which committees are able to have expert or technical assistance provided for the committees. I suggest, Your Honour, that this provision places the Clerk of the House of Commons—a distinguished and eminent person indeed—in a rather invidious position in that the Clerk may be faced with the prospect of having to overrule the recommendations of the committees.

The reason I raise the point at this time is that, having had a chance to consider this matter, I would hope that this would not be considered as a precedent in the future. As well, I would hope that we would give some thought with respect to placing officers of the House of Commons in a position whereby they

may indeed be placed in the unfortunate situation of having to approve or disapprove the recommendations of a House of Commons committee. Committees should have a free and unfettered ability to carry on their affairs.

Mr. Speaker: If other Members are not prepared to respond, the Chair would like to make a few brief observations.

First, the Chair has noted the Clause and is giving careful consideration to the implications of it. The Chair may want to make a statement. However, it appears to the Chair that since the Clerk is under the direction of the Speaker of the House, this might be an instrument by which some over-all consistency in terms of rates of remuneration and scales by which people would be engaged by committees will be obtained, and some uniformity of practice in committees which might be in the interests of the House if it were introduced achieved. Certainly it is not the intention of the Chair, through the Clerk, to act in a dictatorial or difficult fashion, but it appears on first reflection that there might be some benefit to all Hon. Members of the House if some reasonable consistency of rates of remuneration and scales for people engaged for committee work might be considered. However, this is merely an observation at this point. The Chair may have more to say later.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS*[English]***PETITIONS**

MR. FRIESEN—TESTING OF CRUISE MISSILE ON CANADIAN SOIL

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition forwarded to me by the Peace Petition Caravan Campaign with 41 signatures on it. Among other things, it asks that the Parliament of Canada act to refuse the testing of the Cruise missile in Canada and to reject research, production, testing and transport of any nuclear weapons and delivery systems or components in Canada. They ask that Canada be declared a nuclear weapons free zone in accord with similar initiatives by other nations, and become actively involved in working for multilateral de-escalation of the arms race. They further ask that wasteful spending on the arms race be diverted to fund human needs so as to ensure prosperity through peace. Finally, they ask that the above-stated objectives be subject to ratification through a free vote in the Parliament of Canada.

MR. LEWYCKY—RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mr. Laverne Lewycky (Dauphin-Swan River): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition signed by 265 petitioners from Manitoba, primarily from Dauphin. I would also like to note that there are signatures from Ste. Rose du Lac, Roblin, Sifton and Ashville. They now exercise their right to present a grievance and humbly sheweth that since abortion