

Mr. Speaker: I think perhaps the Chair might comment, and I note the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary calling for a point of order.

[Translation]

The Hon. Member for Montreal—Sainte-Marie (Mr. Malépart) has finished speaking.

[English]

Perhaps the Chair could assist Hon. Members. What has happened here is that pursuant to the Standing Orders, the Hon. member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes), as Chairman of the committee, has reported to the House on a report from that committee concerning the whole question of unemployment insurance, and it is clearly a very important matter. The Hon. Member for Calgary West has also commented on the fact which is, I think, a credit to the committee, if the Chair can say so, that there was great unanimity and that members of all Parties collaborated and worked very hard on the committee report. The report has already received some attention in the news and it is perhaps not too hard to understand why the Chairman of the committee wished to say a few more words than a committee chairman would ordinarily do when bringing in a report of such nature to the House.

What has happened is that other Hon. Members have risen and said that when there is a statement like that, perhaps it would be appropriate if representations from the Official Opposition and the New Democratic Party were also permitted. I take it literally that the Chair is being asked if the Chair could accede to that request at this time. I draw to the attention of Hon. Members Rule 99(1) which states:

Reports to the House from committees may be made by Members standing in their places, at the time provided pursuant to Standing Order 19(3) or 82(15)(c), provided that the Member may be permitted to give a succinct explanation of the subject-matter of the report.

This House can do anything by consent, of course. If it were the disposition of the House at any given time, on any particular report, to hear as well from representatives of the other Parties, and if the House agreed, then that of course would be completely appropriate. However, the Chair is in the position, in this case, of having to look to the rule. On some other occasion, and even on this occasion, the Chair does not, under any circumstances, wish to close off legitimate comment or what might even become debate, if it were the wish of the House to do so. However, I think that under the circumstances, the Chair must adhere to the rule and say to Hon. Members and to the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East (Mr. Allmand), the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) and the Hon. Member for Montreal—Sainte-Marie (Mr. Malépart), that looking at the rule, the Chair cannot unilaterally take away from that rule and give the permission requested. In saying this, the Chair is in no way diminishing the importance of the matter. As the Chair indicated a few moments ago, and I think I am quite permitted to say it again, the House, and the country as well, owes a great deal to the work of all Parties in the preparation of this report.

Petitions

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Jonquière): I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member is raising a point of order.

Mr. Blackburn (Jonquière): On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry, but the point of order has been dealt with.

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PETITIONS

OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED CHANGES TO PATENT ACT

Mrs. Thérèse Killens (Saint-Michel—Ahuntsic): I have the honour, Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 106, to table a petition signed by 32 residents of the Montreal area who object to the amendments proposed in Bill C-22 to the Patent Act. They consider that the government proposals will increase the already high costs of provincial health care systems and will directly affect all Canadians who are not covered under private drug insurance schemes. The undersigned call upon the Canadian Parliament to reject those proposals which will increase drug prices for all Canadians.

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE FOR CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING PROGRAMS

Mrs. Thérèse Killens (Saint-Michel—Ahuntsic): I also have the honour to present a second petition dealing with housing policy in Canada. That petition is signed by 36 residents of the Montreal area who object to the decision of the Government to bring about major changes in the housing policy in Canada. They believe that in this International Year of Shelter for the Homeless the definition of essential needs as understood by this Government prevents hundreds of thousands of Canadians living under the poverty line to receive housing assistance from the Government. Wherefore, the undersigned humbly pray and call upon Parliament to increase immediately the assistance provided for co-operative housing programs.

OPPOSITION TO CANADA POST DECISION TO REDUCE SERVICES

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour and privilege to present a petition dealing with Canada Post Corporation. The petition is signed by a number of constituents from the Glengarry—Prescott—Russell riding who are objecting against the decision of Canada Post to reduce its service in rural as well as in urban areas. This petition is signed by 1,116 constituents of my riding. They are joining in with the 5,606 people who have already voiced their complaint for a grand total of 6,723.

The undersigned are residents of the communities of Plantagenet, Treadwell, St. Albert, Alfred, Casselman,