

could in fact stay in our hands here in Canada, where it was born.

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I have indicated to the Hon. Member that we have not seen the provisions of the agreement, and I am very interested to hear how he fancies himself as a business consultant.

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● (1500)

CLERK OF PETITIONS' REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the petitions presented by Hon. Members on Monday, May 13, 1985, meet the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

Order, please. Order, please.

I am in receipt of a verbal notice of a Question of Privilege from the Hon. Member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke (Mr. Hopkins).

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PRIVILEGE

DISRUPTIONS DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, it is quite obvious today from Question Period that the large numbers of Members in this Government are purposely trying to disrupt Question Period and to prevent those in the Opposition from putting their questions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hopkins: I am well reminded, as are all in this House, that the present Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) promised that he was going to bring new civility into this House. If today is any example of that, then it is time someone left this House.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hopkins: Not only was I not allowed to put my question without a lot of shouting and clamouring and, you, yourself, had to intervene on two occasions—

Some Hon. Members: Oh!

Some Hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. Hopkins:—then, before I had my supplementary question completed, as a result of all this, you, Mr. Speaker, cut me off in Question Period.

Some Hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. Hopkins: I am quite willing to stand here all day if the groaning wants to continue, Mr. Speaker. The people of this

Privilege—Mr. Hopkins

country have to know that the new civility in the House of Commons is not working. If we are going to carry on a Question Period, there has to be some decency extended to Members who have the floor. No one can speak on the floor of this House if everybody is shouting, and screaming and the Speaker is interrupting; which takes up the time of Question Period.

I hope that you will have a very firm hand when this happens in the House, Mr. Speaker, and that you will ensure that the time lost by a Member standing in his place waiting for shouting Members to be quiet is not deducted from his question time.

I thank you, Sir, for intervening a couple of times, but I only wish you had given me time to complete my supplementary instead of cutting me off because of the rabble-rousers across the way.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Hon. President of the Privy Council (Mr. Hnatyshyn) wish to respond to the same question of privilege?

Mr. Deans: Why don't you just leave it alone?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, as you can see, the hooting and hollering is not only one way now. Members of the Official Opposition apparently do not want to hear what I have to say on this important topic.

I share the concern of all our Members with respect to the decorum in this place. I think the question raised by the Hon. Member is one which in technical terms is more a point of order in terms of our procedure. I rather suspect that from time to time you are obliged to stand in your place for the very purpose of bringing order, Mr. Speaker, so that both questions and answers may be heard by Hon. Members, including yourself, Sir. I know that the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Nielsen), heard all of the question and the supplementary posed by the Hon. Member. I think the record will show, if not the electronic record, that he attempted to deal with the question in a serious and forthcom- ing manner.

In terms of the matter that has been raised, Sir, I think all Members understand that it is important for both questioners and those who are giving answers to have the courtesy of the House. Some of us who have been here for a while understand that enthusiasm on important issues sometimes causes an exchange that is not part of the official record. I hope that since the Hon. Member has raised this matter he will deal with his own colleagues in his own Party. I can assure him that I will deal with Members in this Party on the government side to make sure that the common and usual courtesies are extended to all Members. I think that this matter is one we should all pause to consider; and I am glad the Hon. Member raised it in this context. As I say, it is a matter on which Parties on both sides can take advice from the Hon. Member and myself.