

REQUEST TO WITHDRAW TARIFF ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE BOOKS

Mr. Carlo Rossi (Bourassa): Mr. Speaker, I have a number of petitions from Canadian citizens in British Columbia who humbly call upon the Government to rescind the tariff which threatens irreparable harm to the Canadian book industry and compromises federal policy and cultural industries.

OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED CHANGES TO PATENT ACT

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition of citizens of Thunder Bay and Dryden in northern Ontario. I have a similar petition from people in Toronto, Scarborough and Mississauga. I also have a long petition signed mostly by people from Windsor, Ontario. All these petitioners oppose changes to the Patent Act which will increase the price of drugs for ordinary Canadians, particularly for senior citizens. They call upon the federal Government to withdraw the legislation before us and to favour a more affordable price of drugs.

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Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane—Superior): Mr. Speaker, those who read, publish, sell and distribute books see the book tariff as a threat to Canadian culture. I have a large number of petitions from northern Ontario, southwestern Ontario, the Kitchener-Waterloo area and from the Toronto area which call upon the Government to rescind the book tariff.

Hon. William Rompkey (Grand Falls—White Bay—Labrador): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by several hundred residents of Edmonton calling upon the Government to rescind the tariff it has imposed on imported books because it will not be effective and it imposes a severe and irreparable strain on the book publishing industry in Canada and on Canadians who want to read.

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PRIVILEGE

NOTICE OF QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE—RELEASE OF SOVIETS

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—Walkerville): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I seek your guidance. It is my understanding that on matters of this sort one is required to give immediate notification if one believes one has a question of privilege. I regret to interrupt the submission of petitions. I seek the Speaker's guidance with respect to the concern which I wish to express.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, there is a great deal of concern and interest in the release of five Soviet deserters into Canadian hands. At this moment the press is involved—

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. The Hon. Member has sought the guidance of the Chair and he may get that guidance in a

Petitions

moment. I ask for order. Perhaps the Hon. Member could help the Chair. It would seem from his remarks that his question of privilege arises from something that has taken place outside the Chamber. If so, I would remind all Hon. Members that that would require one hour's notice to the Chair. I would be quite prepared to take his representation now as the beginning of that notice, but the one hour is required.

● (1120)

Mr. McCurdy: I appreciate that, Mr. Speaker. My concern is with respect to the fact that the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) is at this moment, or very shortly, providing a briefing to the press on the circumstances surrounding the release of the prisoners. It is a briefing which, as a result of communications with the Minister, has been denied to Members of Parliament. Surely it is—

Mr. Hnatyshyn: You can go over to the press club.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I think that under the circumstances it would be best if the Chair accepted the intervention of the Hon. Member as notice of a question of privilege and the Chair will deal with it later in the appropriate fashion, without in any way prejudicing the Hon. Member's right to speak on the matter further.

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PETITIONS

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Petitions.

Mr. Gauthier: Petitions.

Mr. Mazankowski: I move:

That the House proceed to Government Notices of Motions.

Mr. Gauthier: He does not have the floor for petitions.

Mr. Riis: Question of privilege.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair realizes that the Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap (Mr. Riis) has risen on a question of privilege. However, before I hear the Hon. Member, and I will, let me deal with the motion that has been presented by the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski).

The motion is that the House proceed to Government Notices of Motions, which means that, if the Chair should rule that it is in order, a number of items that are in the usual order under Routine Proceedings would not be heard. It is the view of the Chair that that would be inappropriate and that we should proceed from item to item. Consequently, I regret to advise the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister that in the view of the Chair the motion is out of order. The Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap.