

Point of Order—Mr. Lachance

want to question that elaboration. Surely the practical way out of the dilemma we are all faced with would be, in fairness, to accept the Minister's elaboration as a ministerial statement so that then there is a chance for the rest of us to make some points in relation to it.

Madam Speaker: The Minister may do that if he wants to, but the Chair may not force him.

* * *

● (1510)

[Translation]

POINT OF ORDER

MR. LACHANCE—USE OF STANDING ORDER 21

Mr. Claude-André Lachance (Rosemont): Madam Speaker, I wish to draw your attention to my concern about the dangerous trend which seems to prevail during the 15-minute period set aside for statements by Hon. Members under the provisions of Standing Order 21. If I may, I would refer Your Honour to page 7:19 of the Third Report of the Special Committee on Standing Orders and Procedure where it says:

[English]

The Chair would have the discretion to call to order any Member who sought to use this opportunity to convey congratulatory messages or for frivolous purposes.

[Translation]

In this case, Madam Speaker, the Members for Red Deer (Mr. Towers) and Simcoe North (Mr. Lewis) referred in the House to the legal action taken by a Member of Parliament, namely the Right Hon. the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), a matter which does not have anything to do with the political or institutional responsibilities of the Member of Parliament concerned. Madam Speaker, I would suggest that that was a flagrant abuse of a procedure designed to enable Hon. Members to raise issues related to the discharge of their duties. The Chair could certainly use its discretion, which is indeed explicitly acknowledged in Standing Order 21, to put a stop to such improper use of the rules.

Madam Speaker: I thank the Hon. Member for raising this point of order. I must confess that, during the time reserved for statements by Members under the provisions of Standing Order 21, I was concerned about the fact that certain Members were referring to a private action. To what extent could that private legal action justify remarks such as those that were made this afternoon? As those Members were making their statements, I was telling myself that I should take a closer look at this question.

As for congratulations, I have tried to avoid them as much as possible. I would therefore remind Hon. Members that during this period they are not allowed to attempt to congratulate someone or refer to the presence of an individual in the

gallery, even in the first two or three sentences of their remarks. Such comments do not really pertain to the business of the House. I am aware that Hon. Members would like to congratulate many people, and they can do so at other times, but certainly not when they make statements under the provisions of Standing Order 21.

[English]

Mr. Doug Lewis (Simcoe North): Madam Speaker, I believe my colleague referred to me in that statement. My statement was about Unemployment Insurance benefits and had nothing to do with a congratulatory statement.

Madam Speaker: The Hon. Member says that he has made a mistake and it was not the statement of the Hon. Member for Simcoe North.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

PETITIONS

MR. DUPRAS—U.S. MILITARY AID TO CENTRAL AMERICA
DICTATORSHIPS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Mr. Maurice Dupras (Labelle): Madam Speaker, I wish to present a petition on behalf of some 50,000 Canadians who are outraged by the fact that the United States is giving military aid to dictatorships in Central America, and, as members of the Development and Peace Movement, are demanding the liberation of these peoples. Although I am not entirely in agreement with some of the terms contained in this petition, I believe it is my duty, as a Member of this House, to make known the opinion of the Canadian people in this assembly, the highest court in the land.

[English]

MR. SHIELDS—RECONSIDERATION OF BILL C-85

Mr. Jack Shields (Athabasca): Madam Speaker, I have the duty to present a petition on behalf of a number of my constituents in the riding of Athabasca. The purpose of the petition, signed by 585 residents of various villages and towns such as Bonnyville, High Prairie, Athabasca, Flatbush, Smith, Hondo, Newbrook, Ardmore, Grand Centre, Cold Lake, Colinton, Boyle, Iron River, La Corey, St. Lina, Grassland, Caslan, Hylo, Lac La Biche, Fort Kent, Glendon, Perryvale, Atmore, Kinuso, Faust, Slave Lake, Jousard, Driftpile, Rochester, Fawcett, Breynat, Wandering River, Plamondon, St. Vincent Mallaig, Goodridge, Thérien, Rich Lake and Enilda, all of which are in my riding, is to register their protest against Bill C-85, an Act to establish a corporation called Canagrex.

The nature of this petition is to request that Clause 14 be removed from Bill C-85, the Clause which provides the