

POINTS OF ORDER

MR. SPEAKER'S RULING ON SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to raise a point of order for the purpose of seeking some clarification of a ruling you made during Question Period with reference to the supplementary question I asked. Of course, I recognize the point of your comment but I really want to ask about the extent to which one can ask a Minister about the general policy of the Government even though the matter may have been seemingly raised in a point of order earlier.

My question was intended to be about the policy of the Government on Ministers commenting on matters before tribunals and it did not relate to the application of the *sub judice* convention with respect to your work in the House, Mr. Speaker, or comments by other Members.

I just want to add this final point, Sir. The policy of the Government about comments of Ministers regarding matters under investigation is something which applies to what Ministers say, whether or not they are speaking in the House. In fact, the comments by the Solicitor General of the day, the Hon. Member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay), which were the subject of the exchange between the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) in the House last May 27, were comments made outside of the House to a group of journalists.

So I respectfully submit, by way of conclusion, that my questions were intended to relate to the policy of the Government that Ministers should not comment on matters under investigation by tribunals whether or not the comments were made in the House itself.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Windsor West (Mr. Gray) makes a fair point and I think he knows that my difficulty at the time was in having to make the decision on the spot as to whether the question related to the matter which is under reservation or to the general policy question. Given what I thought I heard asked, I felt I had no choice but to make the statement I did.

I think the Hon. Member for Windsor West indicates in his comments that he appreciated the difficulty I was under. I also appreciate his submissions on the question and I will be back to the House, I hope, at the earliest possible moment, probably Monday, on the issue itself.

CLARIFICATION SOUGHT OF MR. SPEAKER'S RULING ON SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox-Powell River): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if it would be possible for the Chair to review the proceedings today in which the supplementary question I asked of the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. MacKay) dealt with what would appear to be a ministerial requirement to be aware of actions in his Department in which they are attempting to collect moneys owed. Therefore, the question was seeking an answer to the Minister's awareness of his

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responsibilities, as Minister of National Revenue, concerning moneys owed by individuals upon which he was undertaking—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I take it the Hon. Member is asking me to review the question he asked and determine whether in fact, on the spot, I made a correct judgment. I will be happy to do that. I thought I heard a different question than the one the Hon. Member has just described. However, I am prepared to review the "blues".

PRACTICE OF HOUSE RESPECTING MOTIONS UNDER S.O. 31

Miss Aileen Nicholson (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, in view of the Minister's answers to the questions about the falling dollar, I would have wished to move a motion for an emergency debate. Am I right in thinking that the requirements for notice make this impossible today and that it will have to wait until Monday?

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member is indeed correct, so the House will know, simply because of the requirement to submit a notice in writing in advance, as stipulated under Standing Order 31.

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber-Port au Port-St. Barbe): Point of order.

Mr. Speaker: Let me deal with what I think is now going to be attempted procedurally and indicate that if one wanted to try something procedurally along the lines of unanimous consent, it would have to be done at the point at which a Standing Order 31 notice would normally be dealt, and that would come later on.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I thought the Speaker was deaf unless he was being directly addressed.

Mr. Speaker: That was neither a point of order, nor true.

PRACTICE RESPECTING FILING OF PETITIONS

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order dealing with petitions. I tabled some petitions yesterday and I take it today that you have ruled they were not acceptable or did not meet the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form. They were photocopies of originals which I tabled yesterday thinking that your ruling to the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme)—

Mr. Speaker: I can see where the Hon. Member is going. The Hon. Member knows the rules require that a petition be submitted in its original form. The question I was asked by the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) was whether an Hon. Member could go to the Clerk of Petitions to obtain a photocopy of a petition which had been accepted. I think the Hon. Member may have misconstrued that. He does know that the requirements are that the only petition the Clerks can verify as to whether it is in order is the original petition. A good try, though.