

Petitions

Mr. Lewis: —and if Hon. Members could point that out when they submit them, then I think they will be in order.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. Any petition presented by a member of the New Democratic Party, and every petition that will be presented today, will certainly have been certified through due process.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. I have just checked with the Table on behalf of my Party and the Government as I wanted to examine these petitions. There are none available.

Mr. Benjamin: You do that at your leisure.

Mr. Mazankowski: Quite frankly, I think we have the right to know if the petitions are consistent with the provisions of Standing Order 106.

Mr. Benjamin: Are you getting nervous?

Mr. Speaker: A point has been raised by the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) which is with respect to a matter of order. If there is an appropriate reply to be made by the other side, then I would ask the Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap (Mr. Riis) to rise again if he has something to say. However, Hon. Members know that it is not appropriate for them to be calling across the aisle on a point of order.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I thought I made my point clear to my hon. friend earlier. All petitions which have been presented in the past and all the petitions which will be presented today have been duly certified by the Clerk. That is the appropriate way of proceeding with the presentation of a petition. That is what the Standing Order calls for, and that is what we have done. I do not know what the Hon. Member is attempting to do in terms of holding up this process.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, I am certainly not arguing the point. However, as a matter of courtesy I think I should have the right to see the petitions. I do not have that right now; I am being denied it.

Mr. Benjamin: You must go to the Clerk and ask to look at them.

Mr. Mazankowski: They are not there.

Mr. Benjamin: The page is still picking them up.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap has assured the House that the petitions are in order. I know that Hon. Members will accept his word in this regard. On the other hand, the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister says that he would like to see the petitions. I understand from the Table Officers that they will be available shortly.

Mr. Benjamin: You can't see them until after they've been presented.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to get involved in this debate but—

Mr. Keeper: Then sit down!

Mr. Gauthier: —this is an important point which has to be made. Since when is the Government entitled to look at petitions that are duly presented pursuant to Standing Order 106?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. It would be very hard for Members of Parliament to present their petitions to the Government before we actually have a chance to present them in the House. Before these dubious points of order were raised by Members on the Government side, that is exactly what members of the NDP caucus were trying to do.

• (1130)

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of presenting a petition from quite a number of citizens from the Province of Manitoba and these people call upon Parliament to reject proposals to change the Patent Act which would increase the cost of drugs significantly and hurt many Canadians and they resent the fact that concessions are being made in the U.S. free trade negotiations.

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches): Mr. Speaker, I too have a petition that has been certified as correct by the Table. The petitioners live in Flin-Flon, Manitoba, and state that the federal Government's proposal to change the Patent Act relating to prescription drugs will increase drug prices for Canadian consumers and will severely restrict the ability of average Canadians to buy necessary prescription drugs. The petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to reject those proposals which will increase prescription drug prices for Canadians.

Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox—Powell River): Mr. Speaker, I too have the honour of presenting a petition that has been scrutinized by the Government House Leader and found to be acceptable. It too is on the subject of the Government's proposal to harm severely senior citizens and many other Canadians by providing for unlimited increases in drug prices. The petition is of particular interest to the House because it comes from a Conservative-held riding, Cariboo—Chilcotin, and the people of that riding are outraged and concerned about this matter. The petitioners are from places like Quesnel, Alexis Creek, Williams Lake and many other communities. These people are expressing their concern to government Members and ask that the Government withdraw this odious proposal.