

*Point of Order—Mr. Nielsen*

[English]

**Mr. Lawrence:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not put too many questions on the Order Paper. However, I did put a series of 250 questions on the Order Paper which mainly seek statistical and background information, information which would be readily available to the government, relating to the correctional service of Canada. About one fifth of these questions have been answered today, leaving approximately 200 still to be answered. As I say, it is routine, statistical background information that has been requested.

Can the parliamentary secretary tell me when the major bulk of those questions will be answered? Why have they not been answered with the ones that have been answered today?

● (1520)

**Mr. Peterson:** Madam Speaker, to date the government has responded to 3,406 questions. Today there were 55 questions asked by the hon. member which have been answered. I think Canadians know that each question costs us over \$100, I believe, to answer.

**Mr. Lawrence:** Not these.

**Mr. Peterson:** Now, we have made a sincere effort to respond to the questions put forward by the hon. member. We will bring forth answers to his other questions in the future when we can get around to answering them. We understand that they are important, but as he realizes, we do not have unlimited resources, nor do I think we should have in all these cases. Therefore, I would be very happy to bring them to the notice of our officials and try to get those answers for him as quickly as possible.

[Translation]

**Madam Speaker:** As requested by the hon. parliamentary secretary, shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

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[English]

**POINTS OF ORDER****MR. NIELSEN—PROCEDURE DURING COMMITTEE  
CONSIDERATION OF APPROPRIATIONS BILL**

**Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon):** Madam Speaker, I wish to raise a point of order arising out of last evening's proceedings and involving the manner in which the Deputy Speaker conducted our proceedings last night. My point of order, in order to be put into proper perspective, must necessarily concern itself with a meticulous review of last night's proceedings. I note that we do not yet have *Hansard* available to us, so I cannot back up my recollections by citations from *Hansard*. I can understand why it would be late.

Last night I raised a point of order which was a serious one concerning the right of the hon. member for Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, the Minister of State (Mr. Joyal), to vote in last night's proceedings. I did that on the basis of the possibility of

his having a pecuniary interest in the subject matter of the vote. I do not intend to go into the merits or demerits of that point of order. I simply refer to it as being the point at which the irregularities commenced. The Deputy Speaker who was in the chair of the Committee of the Whole at the time ruled, for entirely irrelevant reasons in my view, that there was no point of order.

I then rose again on a point of order intending to appeal that ruling under the provisions of Standing Order 55(4), which allows any hon. member to appeal the ruling of the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole. I am sure Your Honour is aware that that would require the Speaker to resume the chair and deal with that appeal. I will have a citation in that regard for the convenience of the Chair in a moment.

My point is that the microphone at that point was turned off. The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole would not recognize me, despite the fact that I stood here and shouted at the top of my lungs that I had a point of order to be heard. He just refused to hear me at that point. I was denied the right, then, to rise on a point of order under Standing Order 55(4) to put in motion the machinery to appeal that ruling.

At that point the Deputy Speaker, in the chair of the Committee of the Whole, called for a vote on the schedule to the measure which was then before us, Schedule A of the appropriations bill. At that point I said quite loudly "on division". Normally when that occurs the Chair simply repeats "on division", the subject matter which is being voted upon is passed, and we go on to the next vote, which in this case was on Clause 1 and the title of the bill.

I rose on a point of order again to draw the attention of the Chair to the fact that I had said on behalf of members in the opposition "on division", so that the vote would pass in that fashion. Again he would not allow my microphone to be turned on, and again he would not listen to my point of order. He would not even listen to find out what the point of order was. He called at that point for a standing vote.

It does not lie, in my submission, within the prerogative of the Chair or within the prerogative of the occupant of the chair of the Committee of the Whole to determine whether there will be a vote. That is the prerogative of Members of Parliament, and once having made that decision, it does not lie within the Chair's prerogative to decide how that vote will be taken; again that is the prerogative of members of the chamber.

In this instance the Deputy Speaker, in the chair of the Committee of the Whole, insisted upon a standing vote, notwithstanding the expressed desire of myself as House leader of the opposition on behalf of my party that that vote would pass on division. He would not even recognize me to explain that point of order.

That having occurred, I again rose and in a very loud voice asked to be recognized on a further point of order to appeal that ruling implicit by the occupant of the chair of the Committee of the Whole. Again he refused to hear my point of