

opposition they will be sorry because I will continue to speak out.

In my hands I have documents which show that a few days before Firestone made its announcement through the night it surreptitiously sent out half a million dollars in equipment to plants in the United States. That is half a million dollars of Canadian taxpayers' money which has been spirited out of the plant. This Minister has done nothing. He has not even met with me. The Minister owes the people of Hamilton and Firestone an explanation and a resignation.

**Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and Minister responsible for Industry, Science and Technology):** Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of my colleague I repeat that we have negotiated with the company and it has agreed to put in escrow the sum of \$13.5 million in order to allow us to find a potential buyer. We have identified a buyer, and we hope to have a positive conclusion very shortly. In the meantime, we agreed that the company could move some of its equipment—

**Ms. Copps:** You do not have a thing in writing.

**Mr. Côté (Langelier):**—that would not prevent the running of the operation if there is a new buyer. That is how we are working for the benefit of the company and the workers of the region.

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#### POINT OF ORDER

##### ALLEGED FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH S. O. 99(2)

**Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order relating to the Government's supposed policy on day care. I seek the guidance of the Speaker, but he will be aware that under the new Standing Orders, Standing Order 99(2) requires that a government must file a comprehensive response to a standing committee report within 150 days. The Speaker will also be aware that a few days ago this farce of a response was tabled, a copy of which was delivered to my office today, and in it the Minister admits that he has no comprehensive response, that in fact he is violating the Standing Orders. He is asking the people of Canada to wait until some vague later date.

Given the seriousness of the Government's alleged commitment to day care, and the Prime Minister's (Mr. Mulroney) promise in the House and outside over the last couple of years, I would ask the Speaker to rule on what I consider to be a blatant and gross violation of the Standing Orders and, more importantly, a gross violation of the spirit of the Government's commitment to respond to the standing committee on day care which was examining the question.

In Standing Order 99(2) there is specification that it be a comprehensive report and not simply an interim notice. I have

#### Point of Order—Ms. Copps

in my hand the so-called response which was tabled on July 28 in which the Minister states that he will be introducing a comprehensive announcement. He states, "However a comprehensive announcement is expected early in the fall." The Standing Orders do not permit the Minister to respond whenever he feels like responding. The Standing Orders require him to respond within 150 days.

• (1510)

Given the Government's alleged commitment to day care, I cannot understand why it came out with this flimflam, sham document today and tried to sneak it through the House when everybody was on holidays. The Minister did not even have the guts to stand up and make a statement in the House, to table the document.

Is this a reflection of the Government's real response to the report of the day care committee? I think it is a farce, and I would like to get a ruling from the Speaker on this violation of the Standing Orders.

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I think a number of comments must be made with respect to the response of the Special Committee on Child Care.

I think as Your Honour studies the rules you will know that within a certain period of time the Government, and specifically the Minister, is responsible for the tabling of "a report" in response to a committee. That is exactly what we have done.

In the letter addressed to the chairperson of the Special Committee on Child Care, the Hon. Member for Lincoln (Mrs. Martin), a letter which was delivered to the Table prior to the number of days required by the Standing Orders—and I think the first paragraph is very clear and within the rules—I stated:

As Minister of National Health and Welfare, I am pleased to present an interim response, on behalf of the federal Government, to the Report of the Special Committee on Child Care which was tabled on March 30, 1987.

That is within the rules of the House. I went on in that response to the Hon. Member who served as chairperson of the committee to say that the Government would be coming in with a further report or a further response on child care. The reasons for it are stated in the response, and the reasons are quite straightforward.

I think it has to be understood by the Chair why the approach was taken. First, the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and the Government—especially he on behalf of the Government—have very clearly stated the Government's commitment to the child care proposals to which he committed the Government as early as the campaign in September, 1984.

Following those statements at that time, and when the Prime Minister was sworn in as Prime Minister, he gave various cabinet Ministers responsibility for various portfolios. One was the child care issue for which I was given responsibility.