

your decision, I am sure you will appreciate that those quotations and citations are only relevant *vis-à-vis* the Standing Orders as they existed at that time.

Second, with respect to the televising of the constitutional committee hearings, I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that that was on consent. I think it should be taken in that light, that is, the consent of all Hon. Members having been given.

Third—something which I should have picked up in my original argument—my friend would be on much safer ground arguing this if the wording of the actual motion put on the Order Paper had been “be instructed” rather than “be empowered” since the committee has already taken a decision. I think my friend is a little late in moving this motion today.

Finally, I suggest to the Chair that in view of the importance of this issue that the Chair may wish to reserve judgment on this matter in order to consider fully the implications of the Private Member's Motion aspect of the argument.

I appreciate the time of the House. I think it is important that we do have a good debate on this issue. We await with anticipation the Chair's ruling on this matter.

**Mr. Riis:** Mr. Speaker, I do not have anything new to add in terms of the debate on the admissibility of this particular initiative. However, I do want to clear up one small error that was made by my hon. friend, the House Leader of the Official Opposition. I wish to preface my remarks by saying that his experience and comments I value and respect a great deal. While I had indicated that the last time this initiative was taken was in 1956 during the very famous pipeline debate, he indicated when he quoted from Beauchesne's Fifth Edition that it states:

Instructions have been given to committees to adjourn from place to place both within and outside Canada for the purposes of receiving evidence. *Journals*, October 21, 1976, p. 49.

That is correct, Mr. Speaker. That was an initiative by a Government member, by a member of the Privy Council. The point I was making was as a member not in the Privy Council, but as a member of the Opposition, the last time that this was done was in 1956.

● (1150)

**Mr. Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to respectfully direct your attention to Standing Order 56 which states, in part:

56.(1) The following motions are debatable:

(p) such other motion, made upon Routine Proceedings, as may be required for the observance of the proprieties of the House, the maintenance of its authority, the appointment or conduct of its officers...

You will recall, Mr. Speaker, I submitted that a legislative committee is a subsidiary body of this House subject to its authority. I would submit to you, Sir, that this Standing Order clearly contemplates the making of motions of the kind we are discussing now either at the initiative of the Government or a

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private Member in order to maintain the authority of the House over one of its committees. The wording of the Standing Order is a solid foundation for the points that I have made and those made by the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap.

Second, I know that you will want to look at the Standing Orders and the precedents in light of one or the other, Mr. Speaker, to see which precedent is still relevant. It is a novel argument made by the Deputy Government House Leader that certain precedents should automatically be struck down simply because they anti-date our current rules. I know that you will want to look carefully to see if there is anything in our current rules, Mr. Speaker, that make the precedents that I have cited, or those cited by the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap, in some way irrelevant. I respectfully submit that there is nothing in the rules that make these precedents irrelevant.

[Translation]

**Mr. Speaker:** I thank all the Members for their statements. I understand that a few more Members would also like to make statements, but I would ask all Members to co-operate with the Chair, as I believe I fully understand the two arguments. Furthermore, I agree that it is an important issue and for that reason I will probably reserve judgment until tomorrow morning at 11 o'clock. Once again, I thank you for your statements; as always, they are a great help to the Chair.

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[English]

### PETITIONS

#### CANADA-U.S. FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 106 it is indeed an honour to present a petition on behalf of a large number of constituents. The petitioners are very concerned about the recent trade deal initialled by our Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) because they believe that the fabric of Canadian sovereignty is threatened by the proposed trade deal. The petitioners also believe that the Government lacks a mandate from the people of Canada because it was not an election issue back in 1984. As a matter of fact, if my memory serves me, the Prime Minister indicated that he was against this type of trade deal with the United States, so he obviously misled the people of Canada during the election.

**Some Hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Riis:** The petitioners are also concerned that the trade deal would reduce our ability to plan our economic, social and cultural future in Canada.

**Mr. Speaker:** I understand fully the reason the Hon. Member is pressing all the reasons why somebody may or may not have signed a petition. However, the petition asks something specific, and the rule is clear. The Hon. Member