

is why he has his speeches prepared by somebody else, because it is impossible for him to give a speech without notes.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. May I ask hon. members to restrict their comments to the matter now under consideration?

**Mr. Caouette:** Mr. Speaker, you know quite well that I was restricting myself to the matter under consideration. However, the member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm is always outside the question or off the track, as the saying goes. Let us leave him alone and proceed with the discussion of the matter now under study.

**Mr. Pigeon:** Go on reading, read well.

**Mr. Caouette:** Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm says: "Go on reading", I suggest to him to read from now on, because when he does not, he is irresponsible, incoherent and he speaks like a stupid member.

**Mr. Pigeon:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. member for Villeneuve is out of order; he is departing from the matter under discussion.

**Mr. Caouette:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm is still in the field, not in a potato field but rather in a tobacco field, since he comes from a tobacco-growing county.

And to proceed with my remarks on the resolution under study—

**Mr. Pigeon:** Mr. Speaker, under standing orders, a member is not supposed to read his speech.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. Once again, I would ask hon. members to deal strictly with the matter under consideration.

**Mr. Pigeon:** Mr. Speaker, standing orders prohibit a member from reading his speech, and this is what the hon. member for Villeneuve is doing.

**Mr. Caouette:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm told me that he was in favour of the red ensign. Therefore, let us leave him alone, and not bother with him any further.

**Mr. Pigeon:** Mr. Speaker, I assume that the hon. member for Villeneuve is in favour of the union jack.

**Mr. Caouette:** Mr. Speaker, I would not want you to include in my own time the minutes taken up by the hon. member for

Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm in making trivial remarks.

Having been in power for five years, a period marked by indecision, retreat and withdrawal, the former prime minister who enjoyed for four years, a majority never seen before in our country—

**Mr. Balcer:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is forbidden by the rules of the house—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. Is the hon. member for Three Rivers raising a point of order?

**Mr. Balcer:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. Under the rules of the house a member cannot read his speech and I ask you to apply the rules.

**Mr. Grégoire:** He is saying that because he cannot read.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. Would the hon. member for Three Rivers tell me on what standing order he is calling?

**Mr. Balcer:** Mr. Speaker, it is an old custom, which has always been recognized in the house, that a member cannot read his speech. On the other hand, it must be recognized that in the case of some hon. members it is a little more difficult to apply the rules, especially when those members are not too sure of their arguments. However, I feel that the house must bear with the hon. member for Villeneuve and let him read his speech.

Mr. Speaker, I now remember that it is standing order No. 44 which reads as follows:

[Text]

It is a rule in both houses of parliament that a member must address the house orally, and not read from a written, previously prepared speech, for the reason that, "if the practice of reading speeches should prevail, members might read speeches that were written by other people, and the time of the house be taken up in considering the arguments of persons who were not deserving of their attention."

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** If the hon. member will read page 125, in the middle of the page, he will see that there has been a growing practice in the other direction. We all know, of course, that over a period of years the practice has been growing in the house to allow members, in certain instances, to read the speeches that they present to the house. Unless serious objection is taken at this time, the hon. member may continue to read his speech and I suggest that the matter be left there.

**Mr. Balcer:** I want to be tolerant. I know that the hon. member for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette) is not used to making speeches and