

Honour would want to consider before you make any decision relating to any aspect of the cluster of argument I want to make relating to these two separate points of order.

● (2040)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, let us not split hairs. What the Leader of the Official Opposition is trying to do is to come again to bat after striking out earlier. That is pretty obvious. I wonder why you hesitate to find him out of order. He has pleaded his case and he was not here to proceed with it tonight. Parliament went on with its business; you have taken the matter he raised under advisement and you will hand out your decision. There is no reason why this hon. member should have the opportunity to speak again on the same issue. I find this contrary to our parliamentary practices, for it is about time for Parliament to continue with its business.

[*English*]

Hon. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Madam Speaker, I rise partly because I have been here eight and a half years and I thought that—

An hon. Member: And you still have not learned.

Mr. Fraser: An hon. member opposite says that I still have not learned.

Mr. Kempling: The guy who said that has only been here a year.

Mr. Fraser: Through you, Madam Speaker, I thought when I came down here, and I have heard often enough since, that Madam Speaker's role is not to protect the program of the government but to protect the rights of members to be heard.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Fraser: Madam Speaker, I apologize for the interventions on the other side. I can understand it because I listened to the House leader the other day when he told us that Beauchesne does not matter, that precedent does not matter, that tradition does not matter and that as long as they have the numbers that is all that matters. They can do anything they damned well want.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Fraser: Madam Speaker, my point is this. I find it outrageous—absolutely outrageous—that Madam Speaker, knowing that the right hon. gentleman who leads this party had not finished his argument, did not keep in mind the fact that as custodian of the rights of hon. members on this issue, there was some appropriate delay, or at least a question delivered to this side, such as: "Is the right hon. member coming back? Does he not want to proceed?"

An hon. Member: That is not the Speaker's job.

Point of Order—Mr. Clark

Some hon. Members: Oh!

Mr. Fraser: Madam Speaker, I recognize the difficulty you are in when the government decides to push you right to the wall, according to the rules. I recognize that. But what we are talking about here is not the right of a government, it is the rights of members of this House, of which you are the trustee, custodian and guarantor.

There is another aspect of this, Madam Speaker, which is difficult for me to say to you, to continue with calm, when some of my friends—and I do have some friends on the government side—are not happy with what I am pointing out. They are not happy because they realize the public is watching this. The public has a better sense of fair play tonight than have the members opposite.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Fraser: Madam Speaker, there is another point to this. If the rules are to be applied without any concept of what was going on at five o'clock and what ought to have continued at eight, if they are to be applied with a sort of antiseptic severity which loses all sight of what it is we are supposed to be doing here and, as a consequence cuts off the right hon. gentleman after only a few minutes, when everyone knows he just got started, then I want to know this: When will the member for Vancouver South, myself, get a chance to talk on this issue? When will all other members here who believe there was a proper point raised get a chance to speak?

An hon. Member: Speaker's discretion.

Mr. Fraser: Madam Speaker, I hear a member opposite shouting over to you "Speaker's discretion." I suggest to you with great respect that you have a discretion not to listen to those voices. You have an obligation to listen to your own conscience and—

Some hon. Members: Oh!

Mr. Fraser: Madam Speaker, they do not like any talk of conscience because there is no action on the basis of conscience over there.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Fraser: Madam Speaker, I have been here eight and a half years and it is very seldom I have ever used any strong words on a procedural issue—

An hon. Member: Where were you at eight o'clock?

Mr. Fraser: I spent many years practising law and I know more about procedure than most of you fellows do, so be quiet.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Fraser: Madam Speaker, your duty is to protect our interests. Our duty is to protect your position. I understand that relationship. I think Your Honour will agree that since you have been the Speaker I have sometimes become over-