

*Point of Order—Mr. Broadbent*

● (1512)

What we are suggesting is that we proceed with second reading. The minister has taken a position, and this position is supported by the government and by every member on this side of the House.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Beatty:** Look behind you.

**Mr. Trudeau:** I know it will be difficult for the opposition to state their position unequivocally on this. If they do not wish to talk about the particular aspect of it which concerns Quebec, certainly they can do that and come back some other day. The House leaders can make the necessary arrangements between themselves.

We have taken a position and we are going to stick with it. We hope the Leader of the Opposition and his party will take a position and that they will hang on that position.

**Mr. Alexander:** You will hang on it too.

**Mr. Trudeau:** You too.

**Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, I take it that the answers of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in the question period were meant to be taken seriously by the House of Commons—and were not, for example, in the nature of his statements on controls for the 1974 election campaign—when he said he was prepared to negotiate with the province of Quebec and that he would be prepared to discuss the matter with the other provinces. If that is to be the case and the Prime Minister was in fact stating what he intends to do, he is now proposing to waste the time of the House of Commons by having it consider a piece of legislation the content of which he proposes to discuss and negotiate, and I presume that any discussion or negotiation contemplates the possibility of change.

The situation is that we have a bill before the House of Commons, as my friend for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent) and my colleague for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker) have said, which is of very real significance to the country and is potentially of divisive impact upon the country. We also have the possibility that that bill will be changed significantly, if the Prime Minister meant what he said when he talked about a willingness to negotiate with the provinces.

There are two grounds to be considered here. The first is that the government House leader should not waste the time of parliament in debating a measure that the government might then withdraw. Secondly, I suggest that the House of Commons has a right to know what it is dealing with. Is Bill C-56, which is the subject matter for discussion today, a matter the contents of which the Government of Canada is now considering changing? The Prime Minister has said he is going to have negotiations. If he means what he says in the House of

[Mr. Trudeau.]

Commons, then he is asking parliament to deal today with a measure that might be changed tomorrow.

I suggest, knowing the respect for parliament that he has evidenced throughout his public career, that he might not want to waste the time of the House of Commons today, but instead go on with other business which is ready and with which we are prepared to deal while he considers what exactly it is he is going to propose in Bill C-56.

It is a matter which the House of Commons has a right to ask the Prime Minister to consider very seriously before bringing to the House. I hope, sir, that in that context, and since this point of order has been raised and argued by two parties on this side of the House, the Prime Minister will consider seriously whether he meant what he said in question period, when he said he was going to consider changing the bill, or whether in fact he meant what he said after question period, when he said the opposite, that he was not going to change the bill.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. There have been suggestions made concerning the item to be called under government orders, which occurs later in the day. This is, of course, the prerogative of the government, and when we arrive at orders of the day I presume we will determine whether the matter is going to be proceeded with or whether some other arrangement will be made.

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, this matter was raised on a point of order.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. There has been a point of order raised by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent) and contributions were made by members on both sides of the House. There is no procedure whereby we can have two contributions made by one member on the same point of order.

Is the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) rising on the same point of order?

MR. ALEXANDER—OVERCLASSIFICATION OF JOBS IN PUBLIC SERVICE

**Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West):** Oh no, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) has done an excellent job in showing just what is happening with this government.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Alexander:** I will not go any further on that point. My point of order has to do with the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Andras) regarding a question that I asked him on Monday related to overclassification of jobs. It is an extremely important point of order because overclassification is really circumventing the merit principle. As a matter of fact it is feeding the patronage system.

I do not know whether the President of the Treasury Board understands what is going on in his department and whether he has been informed or has misled the House—I would not