

**Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)):** Madam Speaker, I wish to be very exact on this point of order. I am certainly in the hands of the House, but it is my recollection and my strong impression that I did not read from the telex. I have in front of me personal notes as well as a telex. In the course of Question Period, I did consult the telex. The Hon. Member said that I read at length from it. I have checked the telex and found that I have only used three or four words that are contained within that document. I paraphrased—

**Mr. Nielsen:** That is enough.

**Mr. Regan:** I said that I used the words, I did not read them.

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

**Mr. Regan:** I was consulting from my personal notes. I am obviously totally in your hands, Madam Speaker, but in my view I did not read from the telex. I felt that I should stand and make it clear that the telex was on my desk along with my personal notes, and if that requires its tabling, then I would obviously be in the hands of the House. However, I do not feel that that is the case and I do not feel it is appropriate policy for such documents to be tabled unless I am clearly in the position that a rule of the House does require that I table the document. I was not reading from it.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Madam Speaker, I have now a specific citation to refer to the Chair in view of the admission made by the Minister. I refer to Citation 327(5) which reads as follows:

To be cited, a document must be quoted or specifically used to influence debate.

While we saw what we saw, Madam Speaker, the Minister has now admitted that he cited four or five words from the document.

**Mr. Evans:** It was from his notes.

**Mr. Nielsen:** No, he said that he cited four or five words from the document. That is what I heard him say and that is what we all heard him say. I would ask the Chair, Madam Speaker, to apply Citation 327(5) to this situation.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council):** Madam Speaker, you may recall a ruling made by the Chair involving paragraph (5), where you changed a word in Beauchesne, and the Chair is to be congratulated for having done so. Paragraph (5) reads in the published edition:

To be cited, a document must be quoted or specifically used to influence debate.

In one of your rulings, you substituted the word "and" for "or". Perhaps I could be more specific about dates, but I made a note in my copy of Beauchesne when you made your previous ruling. Therefore, the Chair must conclude that if the Minister used the telex, which is not the case, he did so in order to

*Point of Order—Mr. Nielsen*

influence debate. But aside from that, and I just mentioned it for the sake of argument, the Minister was very clear about the facts. He did not quote the telex. He mentioned that he had some personal notes in front of him, that he may have been using two or three words that appeared in the other document, but a Minister has the right to quote from personal notes, without having to table them, and since he said clearly that he neither read nor quoted from the telex, he is not obliged to table it.

[*English*]

**Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel):** Madam Speaker, I would recall for the House the circumstances that led up to the Minister referring to the telex and, as he has said, using the three or four words from that telex. You will recall that he was attempting to confirm his version of the actual message from Prime Minister Adams of Barbados. We have another version. He was attempting to influence the debate by saying that he had a telex and he waved that telex around. He used the words that he has now admitted to using and he made a biblical reference in order to confirm that his version was perhaps different from our version of what Prime Minister Adams had said. It is a clear example of why the tabling of such documents is required.

**Madam Speaker:** I believe that it is quite clear from Beauchesne that a Minister of the Crown is not at liberty to read or quote from a despatch or other state paper that is not before the House unless he is prepared to lay it upon the Table. The reasons for that are quite obvious. If a Minister is using a document in order to enforce an opinion or an idea, Members should obviously have access to that document.

As well, Citation 327(5) of Beauchesne reads as follows:

To be cited, a document must be quoted or specifically used to influence debate.

As I was listening to the arguments made by both sides, I felt that there might be a single restriction which might be put on this, and that is if it can be done without injury to the public interest. The Hon. Minister could have said to the House that something in that particular document should not be published in the interests of public security. However, on his own admission, the Minister did read from the document since he said himself that he used two or three words from it.

I cannot determine whether or not the Hon. Minister read from the document if he tells the House that he did not read from the document. However, he has now told the House that he read from the document—

**Mr. Pinard:** He did not say that.

**Madam Speaker:** I think that two or three words means—

**Mr. Regan:** I "used" them. On a point of order—

**Madam Speaker:** Sorry. He quoted the document and that is sufficient to have it tabled. It is clear to me that the document was read from and quoted in part and therefore the rules should apply.