

Motions

role and the historical right of Government with respect to the right of expenditure.

Mr. Riis: A parliamentary right.

Mr. Friesen: I would suggest that it fragments the Government's ability to govern since it would take away from the Government the right of expenditure.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gabriel Fontaine (Lévis): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to revert to a remark by the Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap (Mr Riis). I am a member of the legislative Committee on Bill C-130, I was present during the discussions. When the Hon. Member says that the committee decided not to travel, it wasn't like that at all. He claims the committee asked permission of the House or that it said the permission of the House was necessary. Nobody ever said that. The committee on its own initiative and because of the parliamentary reform, among other reasons, is aware of its powers and it was the committee itself, notwithstanding what the Hon. Member says—he told an untruth, Mr Speaker—it was the committee itself that decided not to travel in order to fulfill more rapidly the mandate that had been entrusted to it by the House of Commons.

[*English*]

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I have one or two points in reply. I notice other Members rising. I hope that I can reserve my right to reply after I have heard the other Members. In any event, my remarks will not be long.

[*Translation*]

Mr Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr Speaker, I would just like to make a few comments on the remarks by the Hon. Member for Surrey—White Rock—North Delta (Mr Friesen), about how we shouldn't spend the money, or the government wouldn't like to spend the money without authorization. I would like to point out to the Hon. Member that it is up to the House of Commons to decide, and that it's the budget of the House of Commons and not the government's budget that is in question here.

[*English*]

It is the House of Commons which will address this question. I hope that it will address the question seriously and possibly divide on it. If the Government wants to have a question put on it, we will vote on it.

This question is an important question since it deals with process and not with substance. It does not deal with the many, many motions that we find on the Order Paper under the heading Notices of Motions under Private Members' Business. Private Members can and should put substantive motions which state: "That, in the opinion of this House, the House should . . ." That is quite common practice. I have several of mine in there. God knows I have not had a chance to have them drawn, since if I had I would have been able to discuss

them. However, because of the draw and because of luck some of us are not as lucky as others.

The point to be made, and the one which has been made by my colleagues from Windsor West and the New Democratic Party, is that it is proper to have such a motion in the order where it finds itself today, that is, in Routine Proceedings under Motions. Where else can private Members who are supposed to be getting more powers as a result of the McGrath Committee and others, as well as be given more power of initiative, put motions which would the Government in the right direction and understand that Parliament it to remain supreme?

We are not talking here about the Government's intentions of pushing this matter through quickly. We think that the committee—and it has been the practice of Parliament thus far—should be given instructions, instructions which it should follow. We have done that before. There is nothing in the Standing Orders or anything as far as I can see in Beaudesne's which would forbid that. It is stated clearly in Beaudesne's that at the committee stage we, that is, the House, may instruct the committee. That is Citation 756. I will not repeat what my House Leader just said. But in this regard one has to refer to Citations Nos. 756, 757, 758, 759 and 760.

I want to say that, first, the motion is appropriately placed on the Order Paper and should be the object of some debate, and a division if the Government so requires. Second, it is a weak argument to say that this would entail or obligate the Government to expend public funds for a purpose for which there is no Royal Recommendation. We are talking here of Parliament's decision. Parliament will pick up on the expenditures involved in that committee in particular if it so desires to travel, or if it is so instructed to travel. That is done every day. It would be astounding to ask how many committees of the House have travelled across the country since September 4, 1984.

Mr. Stewart: How much did you travel on Bill C-72?

Mr. Speaker: I appreciate the intervention. We are now getting into the question of what other committees have done and I do not think that that is helpful.

I want to assure Hon. Members that the Chair has taken very well the point of the Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap, the Hon. Member for Windsor West, the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier and, with great respect, unless there is something very particular that either the Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap or the Hon. Member for Windsor West may want to add, I do not think I need to hear more. However, out of courtesy I want to hear the Hon. Minister of State.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I will be brief. One point I would like to make is that my hon. friends have brought forward several quotations from Beaudesne's. I do not dispute the strength of those quotations. When Your Honour comes to