

the Standing Committee on Railways, Canals and Telegraph Lines with respect to the consideration of the said Bill therein had been distributed to Members of the House.

RULING BY MR. SPEAKER

MR. SPEAKER: This is a novel point. I do not even recollect any insistence being made upon the production of printed evidence before a second reading of a bill was proceeded with. In all my experience in the House since 1945 I cannot recollect any request being made in the House, except in the case of divorce bills, that the printed evidence should be made available to all honourable Members before they proceeded to the second reading of a bill.

I do not know whether the honourable Member for the Battlefords (Mr. Campbell) wishes to address himself to the point of order which has been raised, but I want to say that the point raised by the honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) is in my view a novel one, and one which is not easy. I have listened to him very carefully, as I always do. I have my own views on the matter, but before I give a ruling I would like to have a chance to consult with the officials of the House. The honourable Member has had a chance, so to speak, to prepare himself, and he has come to the House well prepared to put a certain point of order. If the House is to insist, as it usually does, and as the House, I think, may be entitled to—on a decision on my part, I would say that I am almost prepared to give one, but I would like to have an opportunity of looking at this point further and, at least, for consultation with the Clerk.

And a debate arising on the point of order;

MR. SPEAKER: It seems to me that the manner in which honourable Members have placed the point of order before the Chair indicates that they forget that the printing of evidence by a committee is for the use of the committee. I can see the honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre is surprised at what I say.

The point that has been raised is not an easy one and it is one about which, as usual, I want to make a very sound ruling. I say that the printing of evidence is done by a committee, through an order of the House at their request, for the use of the committee. When I say that I am merely echoing citation 539 of *Beauchesne*, third edition, which is in these words.

“In case a committee requires its evidence to be printed for its own use in the course of an inquiry, it will make a report requesting that this be done. Formerly it had to apply to the Joint Committee on Printing, but this practice had to be abandoned in view of the fact that the Printing Committee consists of Senators as well as Members and the matter is one which concerns the Commons only.”

Therefore, in case a committee requires its evidence to be printed for its own use in the course of an inquiry it will make a report requesting that this be done. Immediately the honourable Member will ask himself what I asked myself. Why is it that the report of the Standing Committee on Railways, Canals and Telegraph Lines, to which the bill now up for consideration in Committee of the Whole was referred, is in the form found at page 159 of *Votes and Proceedings*? As found there, it reads:

“3. That it be empowered to print, for the use of the Committee and of Parliament, such papers and evidence . . .”