

If that amendment is not accepted we know what will happen. I appeal to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre who has been around through the changes, because a minority report will not see the light of day in any report which comes back to this House. My sole objective in moving this amendment is to ensure that if there is a minority voice which emerges in our committee considerations it will be heard and debated in this House.

[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: Mr. Speaker, you invited hon. members to comment, if they wish, on whether or not the amendment is receivable. I should like to say a few words in that regard. My colleagues spoke of the good old days. I can go back no further than 1972 for obvious reasons, but I could perhaps draw your attention to the *Journals* for March 16, 1972, page 194, where it is stipulated that:

Though, in its report, a committee can mention the opinion of those of its members who do not share the views of the majority of their colleagues, it may not table a minority report in the House.

Obviously, it is pointless for me to add anything more. That, then, is the extent of my participation to the debate in answer to your invitation to comment on whether or not the amendment is receivable; once again, that amendment is nothing but another dilatory measure proposed by a Progressive Conservative member.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I thank the minister.

[English]

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, I would like to say that the proposal we are debating is, as members opposite tell us, concerned with the protection of minorities. Perhaps we should start protecting the minorities of this House. This House is its own master, irrespective of what it says in Beauchesne. The Alberta legislature, which is more democratic, has been accepting minority reports—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Taylor: If you throw a stone at a bunch of dogs and three or four of them start howling, you know what happens. I myself have signed a minority report on a legislative committee in Alberta. Surely this House will not deny the rights of the minority when the whole matter about which we are talking is for the protection of those rights.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, may I suggest with respect to our process tonight that the Chair take the amendment under advisement and hear argument tomorrow as to its admissibility or inadmissibility so that we may proceed with the debate tonight. I understand that the hon. parliamentary secretary opposite intends to follow me in the debate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Chair has indicated its reservations concerning the admissibility of the amendment and has invited comments at this stage. If there is no

further comment, the Chair will recognize speakers in the debate.

Mr. McCain: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the admissibility of the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), it seems to me that it is not only a matter for your consideration but also for the consideration of the government. If it does in fact wish to present this matter in good faith as good Canadians, I submit that it should support the presentation of this amendment by the hon. member for Yukon. If, on the other hand, they wish and intend to frustrate the process which has been practised in this House and in this nation since 1867, then they will certainly impose their influence upon you to rule this motion out of order. You, sir, as the Speaker, have acknowledged your responsibility. I hope that the native responsibilities which are incumbent upon a broad-minded government will cause it to pursue a favourable consideration of this motion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair would call to the attention of the hon. member for Carleton-Charlotte (Mr. McCain) that it will rule within its own capacity on the admissibility of the amendment. If there are any further comments on the admissibility of the proposed amendment, the Chair would like to hear them now and, if not, the Chair will defer its decision until tomorrow.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief because I have suggested in a spirit of reasonableness that we suspend the argument on the amendment until tomorrow rather than interrupting the progress of the debate tonight. If I am going to be precluded from speaking to the matter tomorrow, I would point out—

Mr. Knowles: Thursday, tomorrow, is an opposition day.

Mr. Nielsen: I am sorry, it is Thursday. The hon. member has correctly pointed out that tomorrow is an opposition day. The intervention by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard), who is very skilful at throwing sand in these debates on procedural matters, has nothing to do with the existing rules simply because of the opening words of the motion. There may have been a flaw and, indeed, one must go along with the Chair's ruling pursuant to the practices of this House with respect to the amendment presented by the opposition House leader the other day. That amendment was not prefaced by the words "notwithstanding the Standing Orders and practices of either House", as those words prefaced the amendment we are discussing now.

● (2130)

What this amendment is requesting the House to do is to suspend the very Standing Order which the government House leader asks the Chair to invoke against it. It is asking the House to suspend the Standing Orders and practices of the House for the purpose of ensuring that a gag will not be placed on the voice of the minority on that committee. Any member who has been around here for any time at all, knows what happens in committee. We are gagged by a five-minute rule.