

Western Grain Transportation Act

rule on Madam Speaker's words; it is a somewhat difficult position for me to be put in—that on a review of her words Madam Speaker may choose to reword the sentences in such a way as to indicate that once the previous question is put it would follow automatically that there is no debate on the main motion, but rather that the main motion would be put. However, I understand that the Hon. Member for Vegreville and the House has an absolute right to hear that from Madam Speaker herself, not my interpretation of her words. The thing to do with that point of order is to take it under consideration and Madam Speaker at the next occasion will address herself to that point.

Mr. Smith: Mr. Speaker, it has been drawn to my attention that when the Hon. Member for Rosemont moved the motion he did so in French, not in English. I have looked at the French version of *Hansard* for yesterday and found it at page 26521 and in the French version of the Standing Orders it is exact, to the last letter. There is not one difference between the form as set out in the Standing Orders and what the Hon. Member moved in French. If there is any variation, it is in the translation, not in the language used by the Hon. Member when he moved the motion, so I think the Hon. Member does not have a point at all.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, on the point I raised earlier, the Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council (Mr. Smith) contended very vehemently that the motion we are now debating is not a form of closure. He may know something about this motion that we do not know and that view may very well be shared by the Speaker inasmuch as she indicated the same words. Again I repeat:

—the motion on the previous question is not closure, because after the House votes on the previous question—

And the important point here:

—the debate on the main question will, of course, be resumed.

• (1910)

I think that is important. It is a very important ruling. I am not suggesting that you challenge the Speaker's ruling, but we as Members of this House can only go by the Speaker's ruling. We will have to take it from that ruling that was advanced by her at page 26540 of *Hansard* of June 20, 1983.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): I think the Hon. Member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) is perfectly correct. Madam Speaker has made a ruling to that effect, and unless for some reason she were to choose to review the wording that she had chosen, every Member in the House should be able to rely on it. There is no dispute in that sense. However, I want to indicate to the House that possibly the Speaker would like to review the words.

Mr. McKnight: Mr. Speaker, just for consideration by the Chair, by Madam Speaker, if she wishes to reconsider, at page 26540 of *Hansard* for June 20, Madam Speaker stated:

As for the last question put to the Chair, namely, what time limits apply in the circumstances, I must say that the Hon. President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard) and the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) are right. In

the opinion of the Chair, and after thorough consideration of how the new Standing Orders could be interpreted, the provisions of Standing Order 35(2) apply.

For the consideration of the Chair, Standing Order 35(2) reads:

When second reading of a government bill is being considered, no Member except the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition shall speak for more than—

It then goes on with 40 minutes, 20 minutes and 10 minutes. Madam Speaker, appears to have backed up her previous ruling which the Hon. Member for Vegreville has brought to your attention, that the debate will continue and, under the time limits we have, it would continue with ten-minute speeches.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): I wonder if I may explain that there is, of course, an interpretation of the Speaker's remarks which is perfectly consistent with the ruling, that is, that if the previous question as put to the House were to fail, that is to say it would be rejected in a vote, obviously the debate would continue on the main motion. The wording used and referred to can be interpreted in one sense, as I said, that the failure of the previous motion would mean the House would continue to debate, but I must point out—

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, if it is simply a matter of bringing the question that is now under debate to a vote, as is indicated by the Speaker's ruling, then the debate on the main motion, according to her ruling, would be resumed. That is the only interpretation that one can make.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I do not know why we want to challenge the Speaker's ruling. When this Speaker gives a ruling, as when previous Speakers made a ruling, that is the ruling and that is it. It is not to be discussed unless you want to challenge it, and the procedure is there. I think we should accept the ruling as given for this reason: If it was not so, this would be the most sneaky way of introducing closure, a very, very sneaky way. I do not know what the Speaker had in mind, but it may have been that very thing, that by putting the question now and discussing it, we were not permitting a sneaky way of coming in the back door with closure. That is really what it would be if we did not have the ruling as given by the Speaker. I do not know why we want to question that ruling. It really makes sure that everything is above the table and not under the table.

Mr. Prud'homme: Mr. Speaker, I think we could go on all night trying to understand what Madam Speaker meant by the words being quoted tonight.

Mr. Kempling: Go out to The Farm and ask her.

Mr. Prud'homme: In order to proceed in an orderly fashion, I think the best way is to proceed with the debate this evening, and at the next opportunity Madam Speaker could be asked to clarify exactly the meaning of her ruling.

I agree with my colleague who just spoke that Madam Speaker "seems" to have made a ruling, but I do not see this evening the relevancy of having a lengthy debate on the