

motion has not yet been resolved leaves hanging the question of the committee's procedure within the committee. This is a further irregularity of substantial and significant proportions.

Finally, neither the violations of Standing Orders 64 and 67 nor the non-resolution of the privileged motion were accomplished by unanimous consent. To the degree that they were regularized at all, they were regularized solely by virtue of a vote by the majority on the committee when clearly it has been established through centuries of practice that the only way the Standing Orders can be varied, save on substantive motion, is by unanimous consent. Within that committee that consent was never sought and certainly never granted.

The bizarre procedural irregularities through which the committee conducted its business are, in our submission, sufficient by themselves to render the product of those proceedings inadmissible in this House.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I wish to draw to your attention two considerations that may govern your decision in this regard. In delaying your decision fully to consider some of the extremely intricate arguments that have been made here today, you should as well rule that until your decision is made the report itself cannot be admitted. First, if your ruling is that it can be admitted, I submit that that will raise for the House these incidents in this committee to the level of precedent because it will put the stamp of approval both of the Speaker and thereafter of the House on the procedures whereby this report was brought forward.

I would ask you Mr. Speaker, to consider that very closely, very closely indeed, as you consider the merits of the case itself.

If you cause to be held off the introduction of the report in the House at this time, it will leave you unfettered in the reaching of your decision, free of considerations of having in a sense to retract this, what would at the very least be, implicit endorsement.

As well, Mr. Speaker, if you do not delay the receipt of this report and allow it to proceed at this point, thereafter consider your ruling and find yourself in agreement with the submission of the hon. member for Kamloops, the House Leader of the New Democratic Party, you will then be placed in the extremely difficult position of

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having to devise a way to cause the retraction of the report that has already been received.

I stand to be enlightened in this regard. I confess that I am a new member here and certainly am by no means familiar—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): A point of order, the hon. member for Nunatsiaq.

Mr. Anawak: Mr. Speaker, I can listen to members of the NDP all day. I understood you to say that you were taking all these points of order under advisement until Monday. I wonder if we should go on to the very important subject of debating the—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I must listen to arguments before I take it under advisement. Therefore, I will allow the hon. member for Edmonton East to finish.

Mr. Harvey: Mr. Speaker, I actually agree with the hon. member. I am trying to wrap this up as quickly as I can.

Mr. Dick: Long-winded, aren't you?

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Well, I suppose some would deem me such. I don't.

I would again call to your attention, Mr. Speaker, the problem that you may present to this House in allowing the report to be received now, should your ruling later today, Monday or whenever, be that the report is inadmissible. Therefore, I strongly urge you to hold off receipt of the report in this House at this time, until such time as you have a chance fully to consider the arguments presented to you and reach a considered ruling.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I had the floor some time ago and I asked a question of whether the matter could be deferred. Your Honour, instead of making a ruling on that, seems to have gone on with the other arguments. I feel that I have been undermined somewhat in my ability to do this now, because of the numerous arguments, some of them very able, that have been advanced by other members, particularly the hon. member for Edmonton East, who I think has quite succinctly put the points that Your Honour needs to decide.

I want to say right away that it does not require consent of the House for Your Honour to decide to defer hearing this matter. Your Honour has that full power on your own volition to make that decision. It does not require unanimous consent or agreement of the parties.