

Royal Assent

Orders provide that the Speaker or presiding officer sits in the Clerk's seat. And we wait. Then all of a sudden, there is a noise that goes on for some time; it is a message from Her Excellency the Governor General telling us that whether or not we have a quorum, we must go to the other place. Mr. Speaker, you should then have been sitting in the Clerk's seat and have gone to the Chair where you are now sitting and called the assembly to order. You receive the messenger and we go to do what he came to us for. But I don't know that . . . In principle, we don't know that officially. We come back and you return to the Chair.

So I submit to you, since the Standing Orders were not followed exactly, in my opinion, although I shall not elaborate further, I will not say that this sitting is out of order. But given the importance of what brings us here today, I would like, at a future meeting,

[*English*]

When we meet again to revise the rule, we will put it once and for all very clearly that what we are about to do can be done. My esteemed colleague and long-time Member of the House was the first one to be present, but there are only eight or nine Members here. I do not see a quorum. I do not see one Member from one of the three Parties, and I will not mention which one.

It is not clear in the minds of long-serving Members of Parliament, because there are contradictions between certain articles, as to what we are about to do.

I do not want to prolong matters. We have a high esteem for you, Mr. Speaker, and the Table Officers. I wish them all a Happy New Year. I would hope that you will take notice that at a future meeting of this House my colleagues and I will raise it as a point of order to be submitted to the appropriate committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I would like to thank the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) for bringing up this procedural argument. I would like to mention to him that, under Standing Order 29(5), "when the Sergeant-at-Arms announces that the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod is at the door, the Speaker shall take the Chair, whether there be a quorum present or not."

I appreciate what the Hon. Member has raised as far as Beauchesne's Fifth Edition is concerned, on page 73, Section 215. I will not read the citation. It is a very good point that should be brought to the procedural committee. I would hope that at an early occasion the Hon. Member will bring that to the procedural committee. I do want to thank the Hon. Member.

THE ROYAL ASSENT

[*English*]

A message was delivered by the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod as follows:

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Deputy to the Governor General desires the immediate attendance of this honourable House in the Chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker with the House went up to the Senate Chamber.

And being returned:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski) informed the House that the Deputy Governor General had been pleased to give, in Her Majesty's name, the Royal Assent to the following Bill:

Bill C-2, an Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the United States of America—Chapter 65, 1988.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Pursuant to Order of the House adopted on Friday, December 23, 1988, a motion is deemed to have been moved and carried rescinding the order of the House adopted on Friday, December 16, 1988, concerning the extended hours of sitting.

Pursuant to order of the House adopted on Friday, December 23, 1988, this House stands adjourned until Monday, March 6, 1989, at 11 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

At 5.04 p.m. the House adjourned, pursuant to special order.

The First Session of the Thirty-Fourth Parliament was prorogued by Royal Proclamation on February 28, 1989.
