

Privilege

the debate. In other words, they are not necessarily interjections pertinent to the remarks of the member who is speaking. In those instances, I believe that the staff does not always record them. Their judgment is utilized in order to record the interjections, when they are germane to the debate.

It has been stated earlier by my colleague, the hon. member for Nickel Belt, that the chair has no authority to editorialize or otherwise remove words that are said. Similarly, of course, the chair does not have any authority to make a decision that words, sentences or complete speeches of a member whose mike is not turned on cannot be recorded. That has to be decided again by the persons who are operating the console, recording the interjections, and so on, depending on where we are. I just want to draw your attention to Beauchesne's, Fifth Edition, citation 41, which reads:

The control of the House over its publications is absolute. For a number of years after Confederation the House made a formal claim each session "that the *Votes and Proceedings* of this House be printed, being first perused by Mr. Speaker—

The important point here, Mr. Speaker, is that if control over the publications of the House rests with the House itself, surely control over committee publications rests with the committee itself and not with the chairman of the committee.

Citation 43 of Beauchesne, in reference to the *Debates* of the House, reads:

Alterations in the *Debates* are traditionally limited to minor corrections of syntax and will often be made by the Member involved before printing.

That, of course, is generally what is done at the step which is referred to as the "blues". Citation 155 of Beauchesne's says:

The debates of the House of Commons are reported verbatim, recording correctly what was said by each Member of the House. Slight verbal alterations are allowed to be made by a Member in order to make his meaning more precise and accurate; however, he may not, by the insertion of words or phrases, effect material changes in the meaning of what he actually said in the House.

That was decided by Mr. Speaker, on April 7, 1933, at page 3855 of *Hansard*.

Mr. Speaker, Citation 155 of Beauchesne's further says:

(2) Corrections may be made to Hansard. If the correction is of a very important nature the Member shall rise in the House when Motions are called to explain his correction.

The implication is, again, that it is only the member himself or herself who can ask the House to make that correction. In other words, the Chair has no such authority himself or herself in the House. Given that, Citation 569 of Beauchesne's says:

(1) Committees are regarded as creatures of the House and are governed for the most part in their proceedings by the same rules which prevail in the House—

Mr. Speaker, I then contend that if the Speaker of the House has no authority to make that kind of judgment, therefore, the chairman of the committee similarly has no such authority either.

One final point under Standing Order 108(2). Committees, of course, are masters of their own business and that is generally true. Of course, there is one point that should be remembered and I invite the Speaker to ponder on the following: even though committees do have that authority, the committee itself, in this case, never took such a decision. Therefore, if the committee never took that decision to exempt itself from the rules of the House, therefore the rules of the House prevail. The rules of the House, as I mentioned earlier, would not be such that it would allow a Speaker to make that kind of determination.

In closing, I do not think that the chairman of the committee had the authority to make that decision. At the very least, the letter should be withdrawn at the earliest opportunity and failing that, I would be inclined to support my colleague for Nickel Belt and his suggestion that the issue be referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure, Privilege and Private Members' Business.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, very briefly, I would like to make two points. One, it is quite clear that we are not dealing with a question of privilege and that the privileges of the member have not been infringed upon in any way.

What we are dealing with is a concern and a legitimate point of order about the procedure being employed in a committee. The hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell pointed out quite accurately that, just as