

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. I shall be very brief. Indeed, I shall simply make a suggestion to the hon. member who raised the point. My suggestion is that he discuss the matter with his House leader.

Mr. Gauthier: I have.

Mr. Knowles: The question of how this stage of debate would be handled was discussed among the House leaders. Various suggestions were made. The one we are now following is the one the government chose.

I make the point that we are not debating a bill, so the normal report stage procedure does not apply. We are not even debating a report from a committee. We are debating a brand new resolution put down by the government. I make that suggestion to the hon. member, because I also was concerned that at least it might be possible for hon. members who wish to make amendments down the road to give notice of them, but I do not see that there is any way that the Chair can provide that. However, perhaps there could be another discussion among House leaders.

What I suggest to the hon. member for Ottawa-Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) is that he speak to his House leader about it. He, of course, will tell the hon. member that we have already discussed it, but there is no law against discussing again something which has been discussed before.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) had not said it, then I would, and I will repeat it. The discussion as to how this aspect of this resolution was to be handled was a discussion which took place among House leaders over a long period of time. This was the choice which was made. In fact, as my friend has said, the choice was made by the government. You know, Mr. Speaker, on reflection it was not a bad choice.

I can understand the position of the hon. member with respect to his amendments, but the rules of the House are designed, as we have seen from time to time, to protect the rights of hon. members, depending upon the matter with which we are dealing. Given the foundation for the rules and the reason for the rules and given the choice after long discussion, I think it might be better if the hon. member found another way to publicize what he wants. I would certainly be interested in knowing what he wants, and there would be another way outside the procedures of the House to deal with that, which would certainly allow the hon. member to make the point he wants to make.

● (1830)

If he had a statement he wished to issue I would be delighted to receive it. I must say that as the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre was speaking I recalled the discussions we had. We had lengthy discussions with respect to the procedure that would apply. I see nothing thus far which indicates that the decision taken by the government with respect to the procedure to be followed is unwise or should be changed.

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Mr. Collenette: Mr. Speaker, I wish to confirm the sentiments expressed by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and by the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton (Mr. Baker). I was present at those discussions. If I am correct, this was a matter which was discussed over a period of months. The government chose to follow this course of action in consultation with the other parties. I think this has been quite apparent, but I would suggest this kind of discussion should really take place in another forum. I hope we will not unduly delay the hon. member for Northumberland-Miramichi (Mr. Dionne) who has been seeking the floor for the past two days to speak on the resolution.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not want to interrupt the hon. member for Northumberland-Miramichi (Mr. Dionne).

Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): You cannot interrupt me when I have not even started.

Mr. Lewis: I would like to reflect back on your comments, Mr. Speaker. As I read *Hansard* for Monday, the hon. member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson) was not finished and wanted to go on. The Chair has now recognized the hon. member for Northumberland-Miramichi. You made some reference, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. member for Burnaby temporarily not being in the House. Am I correct in saying that since you have recognized the hon. member for Northumberland-Miramichi, I will be the next speaker to be recognized?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): No.

What I was referring to is a situation which sometimes occurs in the House; that is, where an hon. member has the floor then some intervention takes place, such as rising for dinner or something of that nature. There is often some confusion about that practice, to the extent that some hon. members feel that if the hon. member who had the floor prior to the recess was not back at the very next available opportunity in order to resume his remarks then he lost his opportunity. The fact is, that is not correct, he has not lost his opportunity. It is somewhat of a peculiarity of our rules, but he can come back at any given moment and pursue the remainder of the time allotted to him.

That was the reference and the explanation. Simply as a courtesy I did not want to leave the hon. member for Burnaby, in his absence, feeling he had been cut off. In a moment I will be recognizing the hon. member for Northumberland-Miramichi.

More specifically, I cannot promise to recognize any hon. member. For the sake of the peace of the hon. member for Simcoe North (Mr. Lewis) I will assume he will be the next to be recognized.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I would like to have this point made clear. Is there some right now for the hon. member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson) or, indeed, any member of this House, to be absent for two or three days and pick up where he left off? Is that what you are saying, Mr.