

In any event, I think that gives sufficient information to the House for the debate to continue.

Mr. Langdon: Mr. Speaker, I would first very much like to add my voice to that of the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy). I think to try and work one's way through 102 amendments is an extremely daunting task.

As with all Speaker's rulings, there will be some that one will feel surprised about and some that one will feel pleased about. I do not want to get into those kinds of questions at all, but I did want to raise with you a matter which I wondered if you could perhaps interpret for me a little more fully.

I am especially concerned with Motions Nos. 26 and 18. With respect to Motion No. 26, as you note in your ruling, this was ruled out of order in committee because of where it was put in the Bill. Therefore, the motion I brought to the floor of the House put it in a general part of the Bill which, from the ruling made in committee, seemed to be the place it belonged. I would appreciate some sense of whether such a shift of that sort to take account of a ruling made in committee is proper and acceptable, or whether once ruled out of order one cannot bring the same subject matter back, even if the reason for ruling it out of order was the place that one had originally moved it in the Bill.

With respect to Motion No. 18, your judgment quite correctly notes that quite a similar motion was moved, debated, and negatived in committee. At that time the debate revolved to a significant degree around the fact that this motion dealt with the concerns of Canadian wine growers and whether they could be subject to government action as the clause in question makes clear. People who voted against the motion suggested that its formulation would allow action to be taken despite the fact that both major provinces in which grape growing and wine production takes place would be opposed. It was for that reason that there was what I thought was a significant change made from 50 per cent to 65 per cent in the proportion of population which would have to be involved in those provinces approving of action with respect to this clause. Again, I wondered, with respect to your comments, whether slight variations in the wording does not affect the intent of the motions.

● (1540)

My concern, as the person drafting the amendment, was that I did not see this as slight but instead as responding to the concerns which had been expressed in the committee. I wondered if, for that reason, there might not be some logic to giving at least the benefit of the doubt to that particular motion.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor for his kind remarks which I know will be appreciated by all of those who have worked hard on this matter.

We have had a practice for some time now which is working very well, that is, because of extensive consultations at the time

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

amendments are tabled, the Chair has felt that for the most part it has not been necessary to hear further discussion on them. However, I am aware, as are other Hon. Members in this Chamber, that this is a matter of some importance. All matters here are important, but this is one of some magnitude in the number of amendments that the Chair had to consider. I have, therefore, extended to the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry and the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor the courtesy of listening carefully to what they have said. I appreciate their additional assistance to the Chair.

With respect to the two motions which the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor has raised with me, I will look again at Motion No. 26 and discuss it with the table officers who will communicate with the Hon. Member. However, I think I can dispose of Motion No. 18 at this time. I remember this very distinctly and have asked the Clerk to bring me Motion No. 18.

While I understand perfectly the Hon. Member's substantive reason for putting this forward, I am bound by the procedural law. Even the change to which the Hon. Member refers does not get around the fact that, at least in the opinion of the Chair, it is out of order. Although I do understand the reasons behind the amendment, I regret that I cannot assist the Hon. Member further.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I wish to join with my colleagues in thanking you and the table officers for your effort and the speed with which your ruling has been brought down in this matter. The Government moved ahead with report stage using the 48-hour time limit, and I appreciate that this puts an extra burden on the Table. We do appreciate the effort.

I wish to advise the House that earlier today I approached the House Leaders of the Official Opposition and New Democratic Parties in a bona fide effort to determine the amount of time required by the two Parties at report stage and third reading. This request was made in good faith to my colleagues. I received in reply the following letter addressed to myself:

Dear Mr. Lewis,

Pursuant to your inquiries earlier today regarding an allocation of time to the report stage and third reading stage of Bill C-130, we wish to inform you that our respective parties are prepared to agree to an allocation of a further 150 days to the report stage and 200 days to the third reading stage of this bill.

Should your party agree to this allocation, the requirements of Standing Order 115 will have been met. If, however, your party cannot accept this proposed allocation, it remains that the majority of the parties have agreed, pursuant to Standing Order 116, to the allocation of a further 150 days to the report stage and 200 days to the third reading stage of the bill.

That letter is not on what one might call coalition letterhead but is signed by the House Leader of the New Democratic Party and the House Leader of the Liberal Party.

In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, this makes a mockery of negotiations in good faith. I regret that we could not have had some sort of reasonable suggestion from the other side. This is also confusing because we understood that the Liberal Party