

Administration of Justice

• (4:00 p.m.)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please; I repeat the rule to the hon. member for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette). The rule is quite clear, that the quoting of a newspaper article, or the author of a book, which reflects upon debate before the house either directly or indirectly, is out of order. I am not familiar with the contents of the article which the hon. member for Villeneuve is attempting to read, but it appears to the Chair, that he is about to read from an article which reflects upon the house and in doing so, he would be out of order.

May I also say to him that in the first part of the ruling I made a few minutes ago I suggested to him that he would be out of order if he were to read from statements appearing in quotation marks containing comments which it would be out of order for him to make on his own. I had hoped the hon. member for Villeneuve would co-operate with the Chair in this regard.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Caouette: I am in no way reflecting upon this debate. I am not accepting anybody else's words. I simply want to question the government, or the Minister of Justice, as to what is true in this?

It seems to me that, at this time, there are Conservatives who have an interest in knowing the article, in approving or disapproving it.

When I hear the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) say that I must take the responsibility for what is written in the report, I might ask him when does he take the responsibility for what he says in this house.

[*English*]

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I want to say with regard to my participation in any of the debates in this house, that in ratifying the views and comments which I have read from the press, and other sources, throughout the whole eight years or more that I have been here, I have done that on my own responsibility as a member.

I agree with your opinions with respect to any articles that may be read into the record. That is the point of order. If the hon. member for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette) is prepared to take the responsibility for the article he wants to read, then I suggest to you, sir, and to all members who are responsible for the words they utter in this house, that he should go ahead and read the article.

As long as the hon. member takes responsibility, and adopts the views and opinions stated in the article as being his own, he may read it. He is obliged to take responsibility, and so is the Minister of Justice with respect to stories which appear in the *Ottawa Citizen* this afternoon. What has happened may well take those newspapers off the libel hook on which they may have been. It ill behooves this house to adopt procedure which would have that result.

Mr. Speaker, you have made a ruling. You have asked the hon. member for Villeneuve to desist. I suggest to you, sir, that he should be restrained from reading the article.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please, it is not of course the business of the Chair to decide what effect the article referred to will have outside this house. The jurisdiction of the Chair is within the house itself. Again, I say to the hon. member for Villeneuve that if the article he intends to read in any way reflects upon the proceedings of this house, then he is out of order in reading the report.

Mr. Starr: Quite right.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I had hoped the hon. member for Villeneuve would help the Chair in this regard.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Caouette: I take full and complete responsibility for the question I put to the government. And I can take it outside the house, by asking the same question, that is: "What is true in this?" That is what we want to know, for the guidance of the Conservatives also; we want to know exactly what took place.

Taking the responsibility for the question I have put to the Minister of Justice, I have a right to quote this report.

[*English*]

Mr. Nielsen: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Villeneuve is trying to do by the back door what he cannot do by the front door. Your ruling precludes his quoting from that article. If he wishes to state in the house the contents of the article we shall be pleased to have him do so on his own responsibility, by adopting the views of the writer of the article, which, as a responsible member of this house he must do.

I suggest to you, sir, that you have made your ruling. The hon. member for Villeneuve is persisting, and should not be allowed to do so.

Mr. Starr: He should be named.