

Point of Order—Mr. Andre

in a new mortar and is no longer flexible and that there is no longer any need or possibility for them to be interpreted by the Chair on the basis of past rulings and application of rulings I would remind the Hon. Member that it is not the first time the Standing Orders of the House have been revised, in whole or in part. In 1976, Hon. Members reached agreement on various kinds of reforms. The Hon. Member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) has been sitting in the House a little longer than I have. He has witnessed many reforms, and as a former Speaker of the House, I do not understand how he could forget that the House has provided interpretations of Standing Orders in the course of the years, and that the Chair has always been obliged to accept them and to act accordingly. For instance, Speaker Lamoureux applied the Standing Orders very strictly, on the basis of precedent. Speaker Jerome made quite a few innovations as far as interpreting the Standing Orders was concerned. Today, we are told that this Standing Order has been interpreted in this way for fifteen years. The Speaker says: If Hon. Members want it to be clarified, let them give me appropriate notice and let us get on with it. However, let us not waste our time here this afternoon with people telling us that on December 21, a group of Members—not senior, but junior Members—may have wanted to be more forward-looking. There have been others in the past who examined the Standing Orders. Well, because these junior Members submitted a report to the House which was adopted unanimously, it all means that we must realize we no longer have to refer to Beauchesne, not even for the interpretation of the slightest word, and those are the words of the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain.

Madam Speaker, I think that these Members want to take you through a dark tunnel, as it were, where you will never see the light. The future of this House is based on its history, on its part and on its precedents, and if we want to change our customs and procedures, this cannot be done at a moment's notice. Today, for example, Members are asking the Chair for an entirely new interpretation of one of the Standing Orders which during the last fifteen years, for reasons I ignore, has been given a much broader interpretation.

Madam Speaker, I think you would do well to be wary of agreeing with the interpretations given by the Members opposite with respect to dropping all our precedents and the entire history of the House of Commons.

Mr. Pinard: Allow me, Madam Speaker, to make a correction. We had at least one meeting with the Clerk of the House and the House Leaders before Christmas and I heard a while ago the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) say that no one on that side had been consulted about the drafting of clause 47. I would like to refer to that meeting and it will be noted that a new text was indeed suggested. However, it was the member for Yukon himself who had asked that such an amendment not be made and that clause 47 remain as clause 42. Under such circumstances, there is no doubt that he was mistaken when he thought that no member from his party had

been consulted since he advocated the *statu quo* in the interpretation of that clause and this fact should be on record.

• (1630)

[English]

Madam Speaker: Let us be quite clear about what is taking place. Supposing that we did not have a weekend and that the notice had been given today, Monday, and the notice would have been published in the Notice Paper on Tuesday. The notice would have been printed on the Order Paper on Wednesday. Therefore, Hon. Members would have no question. That is quite clear. All the requirements of the Standing Order would have been fulfilled.

The weekend has always posed a problem for the application of this particular Standing Order because the notice that is required is not two sitting days but 48 hours. When a notice is given on Friday, when we come into the House on Monday we have had the 48 hours' notice. That is the practice against which I interpret the situation today. If Hon. Members wanted to change that, they had the chance to change it. They did not want to change it. Our interpretation is that they do not want to change it because they wanted Standing Order 47(1) to be interpreted as Standing Order 42 was interpreted, and that is what the Chair is doing.

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Madam Speaker: I will not accept any more interventions on this particular situation. If the Hon. Member for Halifax West (Mr. Crosby) has another point of order, I will be glad to listen to it.

Mr. Crosby: Madam Speaker, the point of order that I would bring to your attention does not bear on this point but on the law of the land. As I understand the provisions of the Lords Day Act and the Interpretation Act, which applies to all laws and statutory provisions of every kind in Canada, they regard Sunday as a non-judicial day. They do not involve those—

Madam Speaker: Order. The practice of the House is quite different.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Madam Speaker, I rise, not to quarrel with your ruling, but merely to comment on something that you said while you were making your ruling that ought to be commented on. That is your comment about the Special Committee. The Special Committee, by not changing this particular rule, neither added to the credibility of that rule nor took away from it, because it was not even considered.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. That point might be well taken when Members again meet in Committee. I would urge Members to discuss again this matter in the Committee. Obviously we cannot resolve it here in the House in these discussions. The question should be re-discussed in the Committee, and I would urge Hon. Members to do just that.