

may cause a number of problems. I would like the Chair to reflect on this procedure and inform me of its decision as soon as possible.

• (1510)

Is there a difference? Madam Speaker, I would say there is a substantial difference. Why did the government decide or insist on having these two motions for approval of the appointment of two individuals to two important positions— Why should these two appointments come under Routine Proceedings? According to us, Madam Speaker, the appointments are intended to fill two positions of officers of Parliament. The words “of Parliament” are the key words. By listing the motions under Routine Proceedings, the government approached the question as though these people were to be officers of the House. A distinction should be made between an officer of Parliament and an officer of the House.

Furthermore, Madam Speaker, I believe the government used Standing Order 67 (*p*), which I will read to you and which refers to motions that are called for debate.

67. (1) The following motions are debatable:

(p) such other motion, made upon Routine Proceedings, as may be required for the observance of the proprieties of the House, the maintenance of its authority, the appointment or conduct of its officers,—

The rest, Madam Speaker, is not relevant to my case.

Standing Order 67 (*p*) provides that the appointment of an officer of the House of Commons may be debatable. This is the argument the government is using today to bring this proposal before the House. According to us, Madam Speaker, these are not officers of the House but officers of Parliament. In other words, this House will express its position on the appointment or the proposal to appoint these two people. The Senate will also have to give its opinion. After this debate, there will be an Order in Council to appoint these two individuals. And after that, Madam Speaker, the Order in Council will come before the House for referral to and consideration by a committee, if the committee deems such is appropriate. As we know, the Standing Orders were amended some time ago, in accordance with the suggestions and proposals for parliamentary reform made by the McGrath Committee. Therefore, any order in council appoint-

ment is considered by committee, if the committee deems such to be appropriate.

Point of Order

Madam Speaker, the question before the House is quite clear. Once these appointments have been approved by the House of Commons and the Senate, once these two people have been appointed as officers of Parliament, are they responsible to Parliament or to the government? Madam Speaker, with respect, I submit that these two people are officers of the Parliament of Canada and not, strictly speaking, of the House, and certainly not of the government. My point is that they should have been transferred to Government Orders, so that the question could be debated under a quite different item.

Madam Speaker, the difference is quite substantial. I was looking at precedents, and I went back to 1983 to see what the procedure had been for appointing the two people who had occupied these positions until June 1, this year. At page 5929 of the House of Commons *Journals* of May 26, 1983, we find:

The following Notices of Motions, having been called, were transferred to Government Orders for consideration later this day or at the next sitting of the House,—

This was done—

—in accordance with Section 53 of Schedule II of an Act to enact the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act, to amend the Federal Court Act and the Canada Evidence Act— this House approves the appointment of John W. Grace, Esquire, as Privacy Commissioner.

The motion, once transferred to Government Orders, was called for debate on May 27, 1983. The debate appears at page 25796. It was initiated by the government, on motion of the hon. Mark MacGuigan—

[*English*]

—Mark MacGuigan, Minister of Justice, who moved then, in accordance with Section 54, that these people be named. There was a debate. The Hon. Walter Baker, the former member for Nepean—Carleton, took part in the debate, even seconded the motion. The debate was quite prolonged and interesting. Svend J. Robinson for Burnaby spoke for the NDP. The motion was adopted and we proceeded with these nominations. By order of this House, under orders of the government, that is Government Orders, a debate was held and the nominations were made.