

**Mr. David Smith (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council):** Madam Speaker, there has been no criticism of the Chair nor has there been any criticism of the Table officers. It was pointed out to the hon. member that he should read Citation 363 of Beauchesne, which reads as follows:

A Minister may decline to answer a question without stating the reason for his refusal, and insistence on an answer is out of order, with no debate being allowed.

That in no way shows lack of respect for the Chair or lack of respect for the Table.

**Mr. Cossitt:** Read what comes after that.

**Mr. Smith:** It simply refers the member to that section in Beauchesne.

**Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon):** Madam Speaker, I do not wish to prolong this point. The hon. member for Leeds-Grenville (Mr. Cossitt) is absolutely correct. I do not recall the date of Mr. Speaker Jerome's ruling either, but it was that the question being resubmitted should, indeed must, be accepted and replaced on the Order Paper.

● (1550)

If you intend to rule in favour of the hon. member for Leeds, I will not make the request that you put the matter over until tomorrow when I could then have an opportunity of referring the Chair to that precedent. If you intend to rule against the hon. member for Leeds, I would ask that you put the question over. Because unlike the parliamentary secretary's interpretation of the manner in which that question was answered by the minister, I too believe the answer directly reflects on the authority of the Chair and on the integrity of the Table officers. It does not lie within the responsibility of any minister of the Crown, directly or indirectly, to deign to tell the Table what they can or cannot do, and in effect make a ruling that only you have the authority to make.

That was precisely what happened in the case that was before Mr. Speaker Jerome, and precisely what the answer in this particular instance was in respect of the question raised by the hon. member for Leeds. If you have any doubt, or if you are not going to view the submission of the hon. member for Leeds in a favourable light, I would ask that you put it over until tomorrow so I can refer Your Honour to that rather lengthy ruling of Mr. Speaker Jerome.

**Madam Speaker:** I certainly would want to look at the ruling because I am not conversant with the facts that justified that ruling. I would want to look at the ruling before saying anything about the question that was raised. It does seem to me that, the question having been printed in the Order Paper and having received an answer, an answer is an answer; but certainly I would not want to say that the answer is adequate or inadequate. However, I will look at the total situation, including the precedent to which the hon. member has referred.

*Canada Oil and Gas Act*  
**MOTIONS FOR PAPERS**

**Mr. David Smith (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council):** Madam Speaker, notice of motion for the production of papers No. 56 is acceptable to the government.

**Madam Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that notice of motion No. 56 be deemed to have been adopted?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

[Text]

COPY OF LATEST SIGNED AGREEMENT WITH ONTARIO UNDER CANADA ASSISTANCE PLAN

Motion No. 56—**Mr. Herbert:**

That an humble address be presented to His Excellency praying that he will cause to be laid before this House a copy of the latest signed agreement between the government and the province of Ontario under the Canada Assistance Plan.

Motion agreed to.

[English]

**Mr. Smith:** I ask, Madam Speaker, that the other notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

**Madam Speaker:** Shall the remaining notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Cossitt:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I suggest that it would be helpful to this House if, when the parliamentary secretary rises and says that notices of motions for the production of papers Nos. so and so are acceptable or not acceptable, he would allow time before asking whether they stand for hon. members to consult to see whether it is one of their own motions. In that way, especially if the government says it will not produce the papers, a member would have time to see if it is his motion and then ask that it be transferred for debate. I think it would be more convenient if in the future he would say: Notice of Motion standing in the name of the hon. member for such and such a riding or constituency, rather than blasting through it so quickly that nobody knows what is going on.

**Mr. Smith:** Madam Speaker, I will take notice of the hon. member's suggestion.

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**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

**CANADA OIL AND GAS ACT**

MEASURE RESPECTING OIL AND GAS INTERESTS

The House resumed from Tuesday, November 3, consideration of Bill C-48, to regulate oil and gas interests in Canada lands and to amend the Oil and Gas Production and Conserva-