

Privilege—Mr. Mazankowski

during Question Period; he can ask two, three or four questions. It is a courtesy. He could rise, and if other Members had risen before him and attempted to catch the eye of the Speaker, the Speaker would not expect the Leader of the Opposition to jump up several times; the Speaker would immediately recognize the Leader of the Opposition. Does that mean that the Leader of the Opposition is not equal to any other Member? He is equal, but perhaps he is a little more equal in the sense that those courtesies are afforded to him, as they would be to a Member who has perhaps sat in the House a very long time. This is in the parliamentary spirit, and I do not think I am betraying the spirit of the House by allowing that.

Mr. Mazankowski: You are allowing the Minister of Transport.

Madam Speaker: Yes, there are a few criteria. The power to select of the Speaker, of course, is absolute; that is one sure thing. The Speaker relies on a few criteria, one being that the Speaker tries to recognize those who rise first, naturally. That is *tout à fait normal*. If several Members rise at the same time—one, two or three on the same side—of course I am free to select anyone I choose to select. I wonder whether the Hon. Member would have any objection had all the Members been on the same side.

I will refer to what Bourinot said about recognizing Ministers. Under the chapter entitled "Precedence in Debate" it reads:

It is usual, however, to allow priority to members of the administration who wish to speak and to new members who have not before spoken—

That is not the case with the Hon. Member. It continues, "and in all important debates", and so on. I have dealt with that problem. I am sure I have not been unfair to the Hon. Member. Now he says, quoting Standing Order 33, that his motion should have been put forthwith, but Standing Order 33 has to be read against something else; that is to say, when an Hon. Member has possession of the House, he cannot be interrupted by a motion that another Member do speak. If he does not have possession of the floor, of course on a point of order such a motion may be entertained.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, the question which has been raised is a serious one. I rise for the purpose of seeking clarification for the future because of its importance. First may I observe, as the Chair has quite rightly pointed out, that the recognition of the Leader of the Opposition in the circumstances described is a long-standing practice of the House, because he is the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. There is no Standing Order requiring that; it is a practice. Similarly with respect to Ministers of the Crown, quite rightly the Chair pointed out, on the basis of the strength of the Bourinot citation, they are given that courtesy as a matter of practice. However, there is no Standing Order which gives Ministers that kind of priority.

Here we are dealing with a Standing Order of the House, created by the House as the Hon. Member for Vegreville (Mr.

Mazankowski) said, and enforced by the House. There are two aspects to that Standing Order that have to be viewed in light of yesterday's events for which clarification is required. The Hon. Member for Vegreville is not only on the record as having been recognized but clearly on the record as having moved his full motion. That relates to Standing Order 33, which I suggest to the Chair has to be taken in two parts. The first part reads:

When two or more Members rise to speak, the Speaker calls upon the Member who first rose in his or her place—

At that point there is a semicolon in the Standing Order. The second part of the Standing Order reads:

—but a motion may be made that any Member who has risen "be now heard", or "do now speak", which motion shall be forthwith put without debate.

It is the second part of that Standing Order on which I seek clarification. That was the situation yesterday. The Hon. Member for Vegreville rose and was recognized, and he put his motion on the basis of the second half of that Standing Order. Without reflecting at all upon the discretion of the Chair which the Chair exercised yesterday in recognizing the Minister of Transport (Mr. Axworthy), quite properly, the Chair went on then to recognize the Hon. Member for Vegreville, again quite properly; but it was at that point the motion was made. The provisions of Standing Order 33 after the semicolon require the Chair to put the question forthwith on that motion.

There need not be any number of Members rising at all because that applies to the first half of the Standing Order. If I wish to rise in my place, even if no other Member stands, my interpretations of the last half of that Standing Order would permit me to advance a motion that the Hon. Member for Joliette (Mr. LaSalle) or any other Member be now heard or now speak. If I make such a motion without any Member standing, I think that the question has to be put to the House. *A fortiori*, even stronger, if one Member rises, I can put the second half of that Standing Order to the House by moving that kind of motion. If more than one Member rises, we shift to the first half of that Standing Order. In either event, in any circumstance that I have described, such a motion would be in order. That is the area that we are dealing with.

● (1520)

The Chair might want to think about that before giving me the clarification for guiding our future practices in this House because it has been important in the past and will become increasingly important in the future.

I have one last point before I resume my seat with regard to the proceedings of yesterday. The Hon. Member for Portage-Marquette (Mr. Mayer) indicated to me that he was going to raise the matter. Again, without any intention whatsoever of reflecting on the exercise of any discretion by the Chair yesterday or any ruling made by the Chair today or yesterday, the Hon. Member for Portage-Marquette, like myself, looks at that Standing Order and sees the final wording that the question shall be put when the motion has been moved by a Member forthwith without debate. Those are the words. Any-