

Government Orders

this particular case there was very little notice for a lot of the amendments. I must tell the House that the table officers were working very late last night and also early this morning.

I anticipated there would perhaps be some discontent. I want to assure the hon. member for Churchill that earlier this morning I went over all these amendments and I could anticipate perhaps the hon. member's feelings. Without getting into it in great detail here because I do not want to set precedents where I am required after having given a ruling to then go into a great explanation about it, there are distinctions that can be drawn, and had to be drawn, between the quite accurate observations the hon. member for Churchill made with respect to Bill C-79 and the oath in that case and the oath in this particular bill.

If one examines the oath very carefully, it is not a simple oath. It is an oath with a very great deal of detail in it. It is those details which I felt clearly distinguished it from the oath in Bill C-79.

However, the hon. member has in a very concise way put forward his feelings on this matter. They have been heard. I hope that on other occasions there will be time for more discussion than there was in this case because there was obviously very little.

I thank the hon. member for his comments and also again his courtesy for giving the Chair notice that he wanted to make these points on the floor of the House.

The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier seeks the floor.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I simply wish to make a comment, without wishing in any way to reflect on the Chair's ruling with respect to the amendments. I realize the clerks had their work cut out for them, considering the limited amount of time they had to examine the amendments, which in turn was largely due to the fact that the government called the bill so soon after the committee report was tabled in the House of Commons. It is not against parliamentary procedure, but it sometimes makes things very hectic.

Mr. Speaker, I was surprised to see in your ruling that amendment No. 24, standing in my name, whose purpose is to add to the bill a provision that would commit

Petro-Canada to serving Canadians in the official language of their choice—in the language of the customer—was ruled out of order. I am astonished, because we did the same thing with the bill to privatize Air Canada, and as you know, Air Canada is bound by the Official Languages Act and must comply with its provisions.

• (1130)

I am somewhat puzzled, now it seems we cannot do the same with Petro-Canada. Of course, I accept the Chair's ruling. However, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say and that Motion No. 23, which was ruled in order, is somewhat deficient in that the English and French versions do not read the same. I would therefore like to make the necessary corrections.

[*English*]

In English it says:

That Bill C-84 be amended by adding immediately line 44 at page 12 the following new clause:

"18. All undertakings and works constructed by Petro-Canada are, and each of them is declared to be, works or a work for the general advantage of Canada."

[*Translation*]

In French, Mr. Speaker, the same amendment reads as follows:

"18. Les ouvrages de Petro-Canada—

I think we should say: "Les ouvrages et les entreprises de Petro-Canada sont déclarés à l'avantage général du Canada".

Mr. Speaker, if this amendment, or should I say motion, is accepted, it will have the same effect as the one on official languages which you ruled out of order.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier indicated there may be a problem with the two versions—the English version and the French version. Perhaps this amendment could be discussed with the Table officers later this morning.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, because of the time factor there was a problem with communications. I notified the Clerk of this change yesterday, because I noticed there was something wrong. I think my letter did not reach him soon enough for the corrections to be incorporated in the amendments. I simply wish to inform the House that I wanted to get these corrections in before you handed