

*Routine Proceedings*

had demonstrated previously here in this House. That is what we have been living with now for several weeks, to the point that the third party have themselves so pumped up that they now think they are the Official Opposition. They now think they have the right to tie up the House of Commons, to tie up the committees, to do whatever they choose and totally frustrate the government from its right to govern. And I might add, Mr. Speaker, the right of the Official Opposition to perform their role. We see by the very fact that the NDP members have raised this point of order today that this is a demonstration of their arrogance and their callousness.

We have an issue which we consider important. It is an issue on the environment which has been raised by the Official Opposition. But what has happened? The NDP member chose to raise a point of order. They have now used up almost one hour and a half of time that could have been used to debate that issue. They chose to do that, I argue, not because of what happened in the finance committee but because they have chosen to demonstrate to this House that they are going to derail, threaten, intimidate and do whatever they have to do to delay this House, the government and even the Official Opposition from performing their roles.

• (1330)

Let us return to that basic fundamental principle of a government being able to govern, and a chairman being asked to maintain order. One of the things that I think we have to remember is that we were dealing with a very extreme circumstance. The behaviour of the chairman of the committee was not something that is done every day.

Why was it done this time? Because the circumstances in which the committee found itself was a circumstance that was in itself extreme. It required an unusual approach by the chairman. The chairman had to take some very unusual approaches in order to maintain order and decorum in that committee. The chairman had to keep order. The point we are making is that order had to be maintained with extreme actions.

One other point I want to make is that we have a very fine balance of rules in this House to protect the rights of the majority and to protect the rights of the minority. We had in this committee a demonstration of those rules working. What happened is the chairman took a very

unusual action to solve a very unusual problem caused by the childish behaviour of the NDP. What followed is what should happen. Immediately there was a challenge to the chairman's ruling. The question was put to the committee and the committee sustained the chairman. The rules were being followed in exactly the way that they should. There was the check and the balance that was necessary to make sure that the chairman did not in any way abuse his or her authority.

Not only have we got a ruling in the House on this particular issue, we also have a decision of the committee sustaining the role of the chairman and the action of the chairman because the chairman was dealing with extreme childish behaviour on the part of that third party, which was disrupting all of the rights and opportunities of both the government members and the Official Opposition members.

The House leader of the NDP, in raising his original point of order, asked four questions. Is it a precedent? If he had read the ruling of the Chair he would know that the Chair had already said no. It is not a precedent in this House.

Second, he asked whether the chairman can introduce closure. The chairman could do it, did do it and was sustained by the committee for having done it.

The third question was whether the report had somehow been tainted by this behaviour. If it has somehow been tainted, can it be accepted? No. The report has not been tainted. I will tell you what has been tainted in this process. What has been tainted is the reputation of the NDP party. They have gone beyond—

**Mr. Riis:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Peace River has referred to the NDP party. That reference does not make any sense. The letters NDP refer to the New Democratic Party. To refer to the NDP party means he is referring to the New Democratic Party party. That does not make any sense. I ask the hon. member to think when he is talking and think about what he is saying. To refer to the NDP party, granted, some of my colleagues were taking moments of that committee rather lightly but I would not call it a party that they were having. It was not an NDP party, it was the NDP attempting to bring some sense to that committee so that the people of Canada could be heard.