

on May 29, 1951, (see *Debates*, Vol. 4, 1951, pages 3494-3495). In these two statements, not only did he restore the exemptions from the rule in favour of ministers and the Leader of the Opposition, but he extended the privilege of reading important texts to the leaders of the other parties, or Members speaking on their behalf. At page 496 of *Debates*, Vol. 1, 1951 he said:

“Speeches, except important declarations made by members of the government, by the Leader of the Opposition, or the leaders of other parties or by some members speaking on their behalf, should not be read”.

Besides these formal exemptions there are a few conventional exemptions:

(a) This is a bilingual country. Honourable Members may speak either in the English or French language. We have witnessed in this House, more than ever before in recent years, a genuine desire on the part of Honourable Members to exchange courtesies between themselves through the use in debate of a language other than their mother tongue. For complimentary gestures of this type the rule is always relaxed.

(b) There are other amenities of debate which the House wishes to preserve. By old parliamentary usage the Member making his maiden speech in the first Parliament to which he has been elected, is granted ample opportunities (see Citation 212, *Beauchesne's* 3rd Edition). Honourable Members have always been indulgent towards a colleague who, in addressing the House for the first time, uses extensive notes. See *Debates*, Vol. 1, 1940, pages 296-297; *Debates*, Vol. 1, 1940, page 781.

(c) Indulgence is also granted to Members who, for the purpose of argument, need to deal with technical data or statistics. See *Debates*, Vol. 2, May 1, 1888, page 1101; *Debates*, Vol. 1, Jan. 20, 1935, pp. 337-338; *Debates*, Vol. 4, June 20, 1935, page 3847; *Debates*, Vol. 1, June 14, 1940, page 790.

In England, according to May, the rule is relaxed in the case of statements on highly technical bills.

(d) In the omnibus all-purpose debates on the Address in Reply to the speech from the Throne and on the Budget, great latitude has always been exercised by all honourable Members, and understandably so because in those debates, no attempt is expected to be made to maintain the cut and thrust of debate which is in May's opinion the purpose of the rule.

(e) Finally, there are the occupants of the Chair, to whom the rule does not apply. Quite the contrary, Standing Order 12(1) compels them to read and quote. It states: “In explaining a point of order or practice, he, i.e. the Speaker, shall state the Standing Order or authority applicable to the case”.

Therefore when I took office there were not very many Members left for me to exempt, my predecessors and the House having already been very generous in this regard.

In the light of the opinions expressed by the authorities, May, Bourinot, *Beauchesne*, and of the latest statements and rulings of Canadian Speakers, and of the practice both in the United Kingdom and Canada, what is, in fact, the rule now on the reading of speeches? I would draft it as follows:

A Member addressing the House may refer to notes. The Prime Minister, the cabinet ministers, the Leader of the Opposition, the leaders of other parties, or Members speaking on their behalf, may read important policy speeches. New Members may read their speeches. The Members speaking in a language other than their mother tongue, the Members speaking in debates involving matters of a technical nature, or in debates on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne and on the Budget may use full notes or, if they wish, read their speeches.

I repeat that Speakers' attempts to enforce the rule, even before the rule was looked upon in a more strict manner, i.e., before 1939, have failed.