

We may be finding we are irrevocably prohibited from debating, moving amendments and having the question put on the whole issue of the development of northern pipelines, what we do about the native peoples, the environment, the ecology, and so on. I think there is a responsibility on the government before tomorrow to tell us truthfully and honestly, if the government can bring itself down to that level, precisely what its intentions are with regard to this motion. Otherwise, there may be decisions made which may make it impossible for us to proceed.

I suggest that if we are to have meaningful debates in this House which are of some value, we should have them in light of what is proposed in advance. If the government's intentions with regard to this motion in the name of the President of the Privy Council are to be realistic, it may well be that the Minister without Portfolio has been appointed as the spokesman for the government on this, and it may be that he is able to respond to me and say what are the government's intentions. He nods his head. I expect him to rise after I have spoken and tell us what the government is going to do. However, I suggest that this parliament has fallen to low enough levels at the insurance of the government and that it should not be allowed to handle this matter in this way.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goodale: Mr. Speaker, in view of the remarks just made by the hon. member for Peace River, it is interesting to observe how the opposition performs when it is in a box.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goodale: The difference between the suggested wording of the two motions, the one on the order paper in the name of the President of the Privy Council and the one described in general terms by the House leader for the New Democratic Party, indicates very clearly a difference in approach on this particular point. I do not think there is a problem presented to the House as the hon. member for Peace River has described. The President of the Privy Council has indicated that parliament will have a significant role to play with respect to this question. The acting House leader, the Postmaster General, indicated a few moments ago that the motion appearing on the order paper in the name of the President of the Privy Council is not an exercise in window-dressing; it is a serious proposal and one which parliament will have to consider.

● (1520)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) on a point of order.

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I am referring to Standing Order 17(2), page 14, where it is said that any member proposing to raise a question of privilege other than one arising out of the proceedings during the course of the sitting is allowed to do so by giving to the Speaker a written statement of the question at

least one hour prior to the opening of the sitting. The question of privilege I raised referred to a question and to the proceedings of the House. Therefore, the letter I mentioned and which gives evidence that Radio-Canada has inopportunistically decided of the result—

Mr. Speaker: Order! The point raised by the hon. member for Lotbinière certainly did not arise from the proceedings which took place during this afternoon sitting. This is quite clear. If the question had been about events which took place this afternoon during the oral question period, it would not have been necessary for the hon. member to give the Chair notice of the question. That goes without saying but if it has to do with the proceedings of a previous day, under the rules of this House a notice is required. That too is quite clear.

I recognize the hon. member for Lotbinière.

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I do not want, as the Standing Orders say, to challenge the decision of the Chair, but you did admit earlier that my colleague from Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert) has a valid grievance. From now on we will not be able to talk to one another without being filmed and without Radio-Canada being able to interpret that the way it wants. You just stated that this is an excellent grievance. Well, Mr. Speaker, nowhere in the Standing Orders does the word "grievance" appear, and that means we are going to go into the by-elections without of any kind of possible recourse.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Lotbinière can certainly understand that I already gave him ten minutes this afternoon just to allow him to make a point that is undoubtedly a grievance. I recognized him and allowed him ten minutes to state this grievance, but it is indeed a grievance, and not a question of privilege.

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Mr. Fortin: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Mr. Fortin: I rise on a point of order!

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: Presenting reports.