

who may be in conversation with committee members, to measure. It is not for the Chair to say.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to prolong this discussion. Again, I appreciate and accept the guidance that you have given us as a result of your decision. I am encouraged by the words you used, that you would at some appropriate time entertain further debate and discussion on this matter in terms of the difference between a permissive and a mandatory instruction.

I simply ask Members to cast their minds back to not long ago when another important committee was meeting on the Constitution in 1982. As a result of that special order, the House of Commons decided that televised hearings would be appropriate for such an important committee. We then passed such an order, and a very clear requirement was passed along for the committee to carry out.

● (1540)

If the day ever came when the House of Commons through a mandatory motion providing mandatory instruction to a committee were to decide in its wisdom for a particular course of action for the committee to take, it would be in our interests to pursue that so that the House of Commons could send a very clear and definitive instruction to the appropriate committee to follow a particular course of action.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing us to carry on this discussion if the event ever arose in the future.

Mr. Speaker: I want to assure the Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap that I do not think it would ever be appropriate for a Speaker to say that he or she would not hear argument on a procedural matter. After all, because we have had arguments on procedural matters over centuries, that is why we have the body of procedural law that we do have.

I have to say to the Hon. Member also that I would have to deal with it when a case arose. I am also indicating to Hon. Members that at least for today I am of the view that the practice, the tradition and the history indicates that these matters are permissive. If I can be persuaded to the contrary, of course I would change my position. But that is for another day, not today.

In the meantime, I hope this has been helpful because as the Hon. Minister of State has said—and I am appreciative to the Hon. Minister for his generous reaction because I think it is important, we all think it is important—that private Members not be placed in a position where they are more limited in their ability to take part in the dealings of this House than they might otherwise be. What has happened as a consequence of this argument I think has clarified the matter.

The second question is still there, and I understand perfectly well why some Hon. Members may want to pursue it further at another time, and if they do, then of course I will hear them.

Motions

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 106(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the Government's response to nine petitions numbered as follows: 332-4832, 332-4834, 332-4840 to 332-4843 inclusive, 332-4845, 332-4860 and 332-4866.

[Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.]

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[English]

CANADA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION FOR LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE TO TRAVEL

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I would like to move the motion that I put on the Order Paper on July 6:

That the legislative committee on Bill C-130 be empowered to adjourn from place to place in Canada and the United States for the purpose of hearing witnesses on the proposed trade agreement with the United States.

Mr. Speaker: Just so that all Hon. Members and everybody else who is watching or listening understand where we are, this is the motion upon which there has been procedural debate and upon which I have just ruled.

This motion is now in order. I will put it to the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

Mr. Langdon: Mr. Speaker, there is a stage at which issues confronting us as parliamentarians become something more than just the issues themselves. When we face, for instance, debate on questions of water exports to the United States, with respect to new trade tribunals or with respect to the trade Bill, Bill C-130, that is one level of debate, one level of concern.

There is a second level of concern which we in this House must at all times be conscious of and responsible to, namely, the responsibility which we have as Members of the House of Commons to respect, to reflect and to practise the commitments to democratic debate and democratic consideration, especially of major issues which confront our country and which would profoundly change our country. That is why I have moved this motion.