

*Points of Order*

report and the statement of dissident opinions to be divided into two documents.

According to citation 552 in *Beauchesne*, every matter is determined in the House of Commons upon a question put by the Speaker on a proposition submitted by a member. Since Standing Order 116 provides that a committee must obey House procedural rules, the committee should, in accordance with parliamentary rules, adopt a motion to publish the dissident report as a separate document, if it decides to do so for economic or practical reasons.

The motion adopted by the committee on November 2, 1994, which authorizes Bloc members on the committee to append their dissident opinions to the report, does not provide in any way for the report to be split into two documents. In fact, the committee minutes reproduced in the second document do not reflect such a decision.

Therefore, it cannot be argued that the committee had full discretion to include dissident opinions in a second document. Again, such a decision should have been the subject of a motion duly adopted by the committee, but the minutes do not contain such a motion.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, we respectfully submit to you that tabling the report and the statement of dissident opinions in two separate documents, as was done yesterday, goes against the rules of parliamentary procedure governing the House of Commons and the committee.

Parliamentary jurisprudence clearly establishes that the Chair is free to rule on a report's admissibility at any time after the report is tabled. Indeed, citation 893 in *Beauchesne*, on page 244, says this: "A committee report may be ruled out of order even though it has been received by the House, and a motion to concur therein cannot then be entertained".

• (1510)

On January 28, 1991, the Chair ruled, on page 2824 of *Hansard*, that part of a report previously tabled in the House was inadmissible and even null and void. Therefore, we urge you, Mr. Speaker, to exercise the powers invested in you and rule out of order the reports tabled yesterday in the House by one of the committee joint chairmen, to order that the report of the Special Joint Committee Reviewing Canada's Foreign Policy be reprinted so that the dissident opinions appear after the joint chairmen's signatures within a single document, in accordance with the parliamentary rules governing the House and the committee, and finally to order that the reprinted report be tabled as soon as possible.

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as a co-chairman of the committee which has now been dissolved—still, I feel a responsibility—I would like to explain why the co-chairman from the Senate and myself decided to produce the report in two separate volumes. This was one single

report which was tabled only in this House and the other place, and not two separate reports.

The committee report, dissenting opinions, appendices, position papers, documents and summaries added up to a total of 1,126 pages. This was rather bulky. So, some thinking was required. We sought advice and gave the matter some thought and, finally, decided to publish the report in two volumes, both of which were put in a white folder marked "Committee Report". This is how it was tabled in this House and distributed to the media.

We would have liked the printer to tie them together with something like this to make things easier, but time was short and it would have been too costly. The point is taken, but it is not really fair to say that there are two reports. There is only one report. It was decided to produce the report in two volumes. The first volume is 181 pages long and contains the majority report, while the second volume, with 202 pages, contains the dissenting opinions of the Bloc Québécois and the Reform Party as well as the appendices.

In addition, we have put together in another volume the 250 pages of position papers prepared by experts, experts recognized by the committee that is. A 483-page summary was also made available in loose-leaf format to limit costs. It can be obtained on request. Since it was impossible to tie the volumes with a plastic or paper tape because the printing deadlines were too short, the two volumes that make up the report were distributed yesterday, as I indicated earlier, in a specially designed folder marked "Report of the Special Joint Committee Reviewing Canadian Foreign Policy".

Positions papers and summaries on the other hand are distributed on request. The index of Volume I indicates very clearly that the report has two volumes and lists the contents of Volume II. This is clear proof that the dissention opinions are part and parcel of the committee report. The Bloc should see in this format nothing more than an effort on the part of both co-chairmen to provide the readers with practical and easy to handle documents.

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is clear that none of the parties in this House have tried to do anything to offend members who today, apparently, feel they have been treated unfairly. That was not the case, it was not our purpose, and that is not what happened.

Furthermore, without wishing to get into a debate with hon. members opposite, it is obvious that both volumes are part of one and the same report.

• (1515)

Mr. Speaker, as you know, it is perfectly clear from the Standing Orders that if there was only one tabling, of course there was only one report.