

*Canadian Unity*

take a stand in order to avoid any more confusion, both inside and outside Quebec, as well as the acts of terrorism which occurred the other day at Pierrefonds or right in the city of Montreal when the confederation train passed through, and in several other spots in the province of Quebec.

In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that we know whether we are Canadians, or whether there are two or ten kinds of Canadians. It is up to the federal parliament to take a stand, to discuss this matter as soon as possible.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. If that is the general opinion, I would ask hon. members not to broach such a general subject in the present circumstances.

Hon. members know that the representatives of all parties have agreed to discuss this afternoon a matter concerning which a similar motion was introduced a few days ago. In my opinion, there will be complete chaos if we put off the debate scheduled for today, by a motion introduced under standing order No. 26. I do not see the usefulness of putting off the business of the house in order to allow this sort of debate.

The hon. member for Villeneuve himself recognizes the wide scope of the question; that was the sense of the speech he has just made. I would remind him of citation No. 100 in the fourth edition of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms where, under subsection (8), it is written:

"I do not think that under the standing order... a motion on a subject of this kind, having such a very wide scope, was ever contemplated.

And it seems to me that this citation applies exactly to the situation which the hon. member would call to the attention of the house and I think that I should immediately give my ruling that this motion is not in order.

**Mr. Grégoire:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I think that standing order No. 26 states that those who would express their opinion on the urgency of a debate are entitled to do so. It is included in the standing order and was added, if you recall, Mr. Speaker, because previously, the ruling of the Speaker could be appealed. Lest anyone be able to appeal the ruling of the Speaker, it was added to the standing order that the Speaker was required to take into account the advice or the opinion of those who wished to speak on the question.

[Mr. Caouette.]

At this time, I believe we have not had the opportunity to speak on this point and the ruling has already been brought down.

I Mr. Speaker, and I admit quite frankly, that if this problem could have been settled this afternoon, I would have been happy. Let it be settled, so that we may finally know what is what. We might have decided this afternoon the whole question of whether independence or associated states would have been better. That I would have liked to know.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I can see the merits of the objection taken by the hon. member for Lapointe (Mr. Grégoire) under the standing order which he read but I think that he will also see the merits of the ruling which I have made. He will understand that even if he or other hon. members attempted to convince me that a debate of this kind should take place this afternoon, it would be in vain. Under the circumstances, I do not feel that a prolonged debate should be allowed.

I make this ruling quite aware of the fact, as I said before, that the hon. member for Lapointe is right when he says that as a rule the Chair must listen to the argument presented by those interested in the matter and who suggest that the adjournment of the regular business of the house is necessary in order to consider the motion moved by an hon. member.

But, I have come at once to the conclusion that such a debate would not be necessary. I would suggest to the hon. member for Lapointe to wait for another opportunity to make his representations.

**Mr. Mongrain:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege.

I think it is my privilege to set forth my arguments in favour of the urgency of debate on that matter; however, if I should be out of order, I would ask you to set me straight. I am surprised, Mr. Speaker, that you made your ruling so hastily this afternoon; usually, you take everything into account and take into consideration the opinion of minorities with a generosity that does you credit.

I should like to say at the outset to set the record straight that I am not a separatist. On that point, I dissociate myself from my friend, the member for Lapointe (Mr. Grégoire). On the urgency of debate, Mr. Speaker, I must share the opinion of the member for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette) and the member for Lapointe, because it is more important this afternoon to debate the future of Canada than to discuss whether there will