

Closure cannot be invoked in committee by a simple hammer by the chairman of the committee. Closure can be invoked only by using the time allocation proceedings as established in the Standing Orders.

Under citation 457 of Beauchesne's I would note that a motion for the previous question is not admitted in a Committee or the Whole or in any committee of the House. Closure cannot be invoked. A motion for the previous question cannot be invoked. What the chairman of this committee has done, subject to an appeal to the majority, is trampled not just on the rights of members of this House in the minority but also denies to those Canadians who want to voice their anger and outrage at the GST a means of having that done through opposition members of the House.

I appeal to the Chair to recognize the profoundly dangerous nature of what has occurred in this committee. I appeal to the Chair to recognize that indeed a *prima facie* case has been established. There may have been a very dangerous precedent which resulted in the resignation of the chairman of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, but the time has come in this House for the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections to look with care and in depth at the implications of this trampling of democracy.

I would certainly be prepared, should Your Honour find there to be a *prima facie* case, to move the necessary motion for referral to that very important committee.

Mr. Speaker: I will hear briefly the hon. member for Essex—Windsor. I want to apologize to the hon. member because I got him out of chronology. It was an error on my part. It was not intentional. I will hear the hon. member briefly.

I want to advise hon. members that I have the point. I will listen to the other side in a moment so I do want it to be brief.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I speak as a member of the finance committee and as someone who feels as a member of Parliament and a member of that finance committee that my privileges have been deeply threatened by what has taken place within the finance committee over the past two or three days.

Privilege

• (1620)

I wish to deal with several additional points beside those which have been brought to your attention. I think the case has been made clearly by some of my colleagues as to how the privileges which they enjoy as members of Parliament, and in the case of my colleague from Yorkton—Melville as a member of the finance committee, have been affected by this set of decisions and actions within the committee itself. I want to deal with several other related but not directly similar points within the committee.

First, there has been brief reference made to this point by my colleague from Nickel Belt. He indicated that certain threats were in fact put before the committee by a member of the committee during yesterday's debate. Since these threats were put while I was making certain of my comments, I can certainly attest to the Speaker that I took them as threats directed toward myself.

Mr. Speaker: With a succinct and well argued case, the hon. member is now saying that apart from anything else that happened in the committee he felt that he was threatened. If he were threatened by a single comment of some irritated member, I am not too sympathetic. If, on the other hand, members were seriously considering calling in the police, that is another matter at all. I ask the hon. member to remember that I have asked him to be brief and to stick to points that help me to decide the essential point in front of me. If we are going to get off on to another point, I may have to put that point aside completely and hear it in another argument.

Mr. Langdon: I am very much in the Speaker's hands whether this is a point which should be raised in the context of this discussion of what happened in the committee.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member knows that I would not in any way limit his right to bring a matter to the Chair, but I have heard a number of members already this afternoon and that has not been the point that has been put before me.

First I would say to the hon. member that if he wants to raise it at another time, I will accept that I have notice of it. Unless there is a very strong indication of the part of all hon. members that this now becomes one of the major points I have to consider, I think it should be dealt with separately.