

*Government Orders*

Madam Speaker, my point is that in this House, whatever happens, all members should be treated the same.

[English]

**An hon. member:** I never said no.

**Mrs. Marleau:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As a member desiring to assist the Chair I want to tell you I was sitting in my place here when the question was put. I was looking over to the left of me and as far as I could hear there was no response when the question was put. In the interest of helping with the work of this Chamber, common sense might dictate that the question be put at this time.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** I do not and did not, since it was brought to my attention, at any time doubt the word of members who said they did say no.

[Translation]

However, I assured the House that I did not hear them say I therefore declared the motion carried. At this point, since the House is the master of what it does and since I am obviously here to do what the House asks me to do, if there is unanimous consent, I am prepared to put the question again, and I would, of course, do so immediately. Is there unanimous consent?

• (1110)

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** There is no unanimous consent.

[English]

**Mr. Scott (Hamilton—Wentworth):** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I have seen this kind of dispute in the House of Commons for well on 35 years, 20 years up there in the press gallery and 15 years here.

When we reach such an impasse, is it not advisable to adjourn the House for 15 minutes and let the key parties discuss how we are going to resolve this? It must look crazy to the public watching. To cool down tempers we should adjourn the House for 15 minutes and let the people involved discuss it.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** What for?

[Translation]

I would like to read to the House a passage from Beauchesne's sixth edition, citation 558, which may help

the House understand the problem we are now facing. As I said earlier, I do not doubt the word of hon. members who say they said no, and I do not think they doubt I am telling the truth when I say I did not hear them.

[English]

I think telling me I did not listen is really unfair. I did and I did not hear. This is a fact.

[Translation]

I then declared the motion carried. Citation 558 reads as follows:

(1) An old rule of Parliament reads: "That a question being once made and carried in the affirmative or negative, cannot be questioned again but must stand as the judgment of the House."

That is where we are and I believe that we must resume the debate at this point. The hon. minister has the floor.

[English]

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** As I was saying, in 1984 we created a comprehensive plan of action that covered a range of things such as privatization, deregulation, tax reform, fiscal control as well as means of allowing and encouraging the country to look outward through the negotiations on trade access, the GATT, the free trade agreement with the United States and now the NAFTA involving Mexico.

This has resulted in a very solid basis of support for the economic activities that are happening today. I believe our policies have helped our country weather the economic storms we have had over the past two or three years, and other economists would agree. Without this program of economic reforms, the impact of the global recession on Canada would have been much more severe. Today we are better positioned than ever to catch the next wave of strong economic expansion. That is what the recent economic statistics are indicating to us right now.

The bill before us today, when passed by Parliament will affirm Canada's foresight in negotiating the North American free trade agreement. When the agreement goes into force next January with the approval of all three countries, the North American free trade agreement will provide Canadians with a strengthened base from which to tackle the rugged terrain of the global marketplace.