

Canadian Flag

found on page 165. I am going to read the first paragraph. It is not particularly relevant but it is close to the question. It reads:

A substantive motion is a self-contained proposal not incidental to any proceeding, amendable and drafted in such a way as to be capable of expressing a decision of the house.

What we will have before us in the name of the Prime Minister is a substantive motion. But the next paragraph is germane to the problem I have raised. It reads as follows:

Privileged motions, which must not be mistaken for questions of privilege, deal with situations arising from the subject matter of, or the debate on, the original question either in consequence or in anticipation of a vote or through the necessity of resorting to new proceedings.

That is exactly the kind of motion we would need in the course of this debate unless, as I say, some other way is found to deal with the matter. We will need a vote on a matter that will arise in anticipation of the vote. I draw hon. members' attention to the next two sentences in the citation with regard to what happens when motions of this kind are made:

They must be given the right of way when proposed during a debate. They are divided into superseding motions and amendments.

The various kinds of such motions are then indicated. So what we have reached at this point, Mr. Speaker, is that it is possible, despite standing order 44 which seems to say that nothing of this kind can be done, to bring in a motion during the course of the debate—some member of the cabinet or anybody else in the house can do it—which would be in order, which would not require notice, which would not require unanimous consent, and on the basis of which by a free vote the house itself would make the decision.

One of the kinds of motions referred to on page 195—as well as in several other places—that can be made under that heading is a motion for reading the orders of the day. I suppose many members have seen that phrase in our rule book a number of times, "reading the orders of the day", and have wondered, as I have, what it meant. The authorities are not extremely helpful, but it is interesting to go back to a precedent. In this connection I went back, proceeding from a footnote in Bourinot, to the session of 1883. On March 16 of that year a very interesting proceeding took place in the House of Commons. Sir John A. Macdonald was prime minister at the time.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

[Mr. Knowles.]

Mr. Knowles: I paused for a moment so that applause could be noted because I agree with what Sir John A. Macdonald did on that occasion. I hope his supporters will take the same position and, since he was speaking from the government side, I hope the government will take that position as well.

The reason I looked up this debate on March 16, 1883, was that Bourinot referred to it as an occasion when a motion that had two distinct propositions was split. It is an interesting motion and was to the effect that a paragraph out of the speech from the throne, a paragraph that had to do with the sale of liquor, should be referred to a special committee and that, notwithstanding a certain standing order, that special committee should be composed of certain members. This motion to refer a paragraph to the committee and that the committee should consist of certain members was split into two parts.

The Liberal opposition of the day, the spokesman for which on that occasion was Hon. Edward Blake, objected to what was being done. The Speaker of the day, in very clear words, simply said that the motion could be divided. This reference will be found at page 253 of *Hansard* for March 16, 1883. The reason for the desire to divide the motion was that the propositions were distinctly separate. One was the idea to set up a committee to deal with the sale of liquor; the other was the question as to who should be on the committee. Apparently there were many members of the Liberal party who did not want to be members of the committee, and a furor developed. At any rate, the motion was divided into two distinct parts and they were voted upon separately; in fact there was a recorded division in both cases.

This is an example, Mr. Speaker, of where research into past procedures is sometimes more rewarding than one expects. Oddly enough, when one studies the incident that took place on March 16, 1883 one finds something that will help us today. It is not only that a complicated motion can be divided, that Mr. Speaker made the ruling that it could be divided, but the point that is really interesting is how they got to the motion at all on March 16, 1883. It referred to a paragraph in the speech from the throne. The speech from the throne had already been debated and the address thanking His Excellency for it had already been passed. During the course of that debate, however, there had been considerable discussion about this paragraph relating to the sale of intoxicating liquor, and there was a desire generally