

Study on Manpower

made the first count and reported to the Acting Speaker who was in the chair, he must have reported fewer than 20. What counts for the purpose of the rules is what happened then, not what happened later. I submit that stalling in this way is violating our traditions and the principles of citation 60. I submit that if we are to have the kind of rules this government wants, we had better comply with them to the letter.

Mr. Forest: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) should have quoted the paragraph in Beauchesne's fourth edition which precedes the one he read. That paragraph provides:

While the house is being counted the doors remain open and members can come in during the whole time occupied by the counting.

That is what happened.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Forest: While hon. members were running out, others were running in. I would ask hon. members to note that of the 26 members in the house at the time, one was a Conservative, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), one a Cr ditiste, and 24 were Liberals.

Mr. Stanfield: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I did not intend to become involved in this matter, but I have no hesitation in saying that when I was in the house there were not 20 members present when the count was taken. As an observer I can say that there were not 20 members here—I do not make anything of it—including any who came in.

Mr. Haidasz: Name them.

Mr. Stanfield: I just say that, Mr. Speaker. There is no question about it.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I submit, Mr. Speaker, that there can be only one Speaker at a time, and when the Acting Speaker was in the chair and this point was raised there were not 20 members present. With the coming and going during the first count made by the Clerk Assistant, it did not produce 20 members. We were here; we saw what was going on. There were only 14, or 15 at most. Only when the second count was taken, ten minutes later, were there 26 members present. I submit that in terms of

the count made when the Acting Speaker was in the chair, which was reported to him by the Clerk Assistant, there could not have been 20 members present.

• (5:30 p.m.)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Lachance: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

I note that under paragraph 3, which is not often used in such circumstances, the task of making the count of hon. members in order to see if there is a quorum does not rest with the clerk but with the Speaker himself.

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, I have just learned something new.

I find it strange that responsible people like the members of parliament refuse to recognize an accomplished fact. I was here a while ago when the problem was raised. I was writing, but I was listening just the same to the proceedings of the house and I did see that there were fewer than 20 members in the house. Now, I feel that this will never occur again. I hope so at least, because if we do not comply with the rules that exist, why should we waste our time discussing sections 75A, 75B and 75C to try to improve conditions. The standing orders exist, but they are not enforced.

Now, Mr. Speaker, members on both sides of the house are trying to interpret the standing orders but if I understand the circumstances, I admit that when Your Honour took the chair again there were more members in the house, but when the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) indicated to the Acting Speaker there was no quorum, of course it was so.

Mr. Boulanger: Because the members had gone out.

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): Of course, if they had not gone out, there would have been enough members in the house. That is precisely why the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) is objecting, because quite a few members are not in the house.

Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, the point of order is justified.

An hon. Member: How many Cr ditistes are there?