

Introduction of Bills

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon) is, of course, relating the issue correctly. I have to say to him with apologies that I have been occupied with some other matters and I am not ready, as of the moment, to respond to the matter that he has raised, but I will try to do so as quickly as possible.

Mr. Langdon: Mr. Speaker, just to put the point, we now have the language in front of us and the language indicates clearly that the Minister for International Trade actually described—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member will, I know, want to cooperate with the Chair. The Chair will carefully read the language. If the Chair feels that there is any necessity to come back and hear further argument from the Hon. Member, I most certainly will do so, but perhaps at a more appropriate time. I know the Hon. Member would want to assist the Chair in that.

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AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT THE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade) moved that Bill C-130, an Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the United States of America be now read the first time and be printed.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour will say yea.

Some Hon. Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will say nay.

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five Members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: Call in the Members.

The House divided on the motion (Mr. Crosbie), which was agreed to on the following division:

● (1230)

Before the taking of the vote:

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise a very important point of order. The Official Opposition knows and

everybody in the House knows that when a Bill is introduced leave to introduce a Bill is usually put to the House and then that being given, first reading follows. In this case, the television cameras were telling us that we were called in to vote on the first reading of this Bill. I inquired of my people why we were not voting on leave to introduce the Bill and I was told by experts in the field that the procedure of leave had not been put to the House because this Bill was based on a Ways and Means motion to which the House gave concurrence last Friday. I am sure everybody recalls that.

My argument is that the Government needs leave to introduce a Bill to spend money. We are not talking about a Ways and Means motion. I could read it to you, Mr. Speaker, but for the sake of brevity, I will not read the Ways and Means motion. It goes to the heart of the Government's authority to impose customs duties, to authorize the imposition of temporary duties and to authorize the imposition of duties for emergency action.

This Bill before us today has a Royal recommendation attached to it. It is entitled "An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the United States of America". The recommendation reads:

Her Excellency the Governor General recommends to the House of Commons the appropriation of public revenue under the circumstances, in the manner and for the purposes set out in a measure entitled "An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the United States of America".

Standing Order 84(11) is very clear on that matter. It talks about the effect of a motion being adopted, namely, a Ways and Means motion. It reads:

The adoption of any Ways and Means motion shall be an order to bring in a bill or bills based on the provisions of any such motion.

I submit that the Bill before us is not a Bill which meets the requirements of the Ways and Means motion. It is a new Bill, completely different from a Bill that would be based on the Ways and Means motion and, therefore, the House should not pronounce itself at this time on this question without seeking leave to introduce a Bill, a Bill for which the Government has a right to ask and to seek leave but that leave must be put before we proceed with a Bill. I have no argument against the Ways and Means motion procedure, but I argue strongly that for the Government to spend money it must ask authority from the people of Canada represented here in this House.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I concur with the previous speaker that leave to introduce this Bill is now the motion which should be put before the House, critical aspect being that this requires Royal recommendation and must receive Royal recommendation. Consequently, having looked at the precedents, I am hard pressed to find a precedent to permit us to proceed with the step that we are now about to initiate. Before we begin, would it not be appropriate to ask you to identify the precedent we are using today allowing us to proceed along this particular avenue.