

process of review of Order in Council appointments, jurisprudence that will reinforce Standing Orders 103 and 104 will eventually emerge.

I think the Chair can also add on the basis of fairness that the citizens who appear before these committees have probably never gone through a procedure such as this before. It behooves all Hon. Members to recognize that these citizens are serving our country and that questions concerning them that are appropriate before the committee ought to be put in a manner of good will and care for the sensibilities of ordinary citizens who, as I say, would probably never in their lives, if they are lucky, have to appear before a group of people who are asking them a lot of questions that they had never, in some circumstances, anticipated.

I know that Hon. Members who have had some experience with the law, whether as litigants or as members of the bar, will know that one of the most awesome things a citizen is called upon to do is to be a witness in a proceeding. I would ask all Hon. Members to take special care, when citizens have responded to the request of the Government of Canada to serve, that they are treated with appropriate courtesy and fairness at all times when appearing before committees.

Again, I wish to thank the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister for bringing this matter to the attention of the Chair and I hope the remarks of the Chair will assist all Hon. Members and the committees in providing fair and proper treatment for the citizens who come before them.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Just for clarification, can I take it from your ruling that notwithstanding the fact that a person may be before the respective committee under the provisions of Standing Orders 103 and 104, during the course of his examination, you would allow questions in the House of Commons while he is currently before a committee under the framework of the ruling that you just brought down?

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Deputy Prime Minister has raised a question which indicates that there may be some ambiguity in the ruling I have given. In order to be absolutely sure that there is no ambiguity, I would ask the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister if he would consider allowing me to take the question he has raised under advisement.

While I think I made it clear that, certainly in general terms, Hon. Members ought not to be forbidden from raising a question in this Chamber, I also said that I would take each one of those questions and consider them carefully at that time in the context of what is happening. I would ask the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister if he would let me carefully consider the point he has raised because I do not want to leave Hon. Members in doubt. I might advise Hon. Members that there was a further ruling that I was hoping to give today. The Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps) who raised the matter is unable to be here at this moment. I will return to the Chamber when it is appropriate to do so, and when the Hon. Member can hear the ruling.

Business of the House

• (1130)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

DISPOSITION OF PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: I have received written notice from the Hon. Member for New Westminster—Coquitlam (Ms. Jewett) that due to a prior commitment she is unable to be present in the House on Friday, December 12, 1986, to move her motion during the hour for Private Members' Business.

Accordingly, I am directing the Table to drop that item of business to the bottom of the order of precedence. Since notice will thereby be removed, the hour for Private Members' Business will be suspended, and pursuant to Standing Order 39(2), the House will continue with the business before it prior to that hour until the ordinary hour of daily adjournment.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I apologize for rising on a point of order following your announcement.

May I say as the Whip of my Party—and I know if the Whip for the government side could speak he would do so—that we are very much preoccupied by the rights of private Members to introduce and present to the House motions and Bills which they feel are important. The present procedure prevents private Members having the one, two, three, or four hours a week in which they are allowed to discuss these items. Therefore, I would like to recommend and ask the Government that it pay attention to yesterday's Order Paper, where I moved a motion which addressed that problem. It would allow private Members who are outside that preferred group of 20 who were chosen by draw, those of us who did not make it, at the request of the Table to be present to present our Bills or motions for discussion in this House. That would meet the requirements of the rights of private Members to be heard in the House at the hour allowed for them to do so, and also meet with the requirements of Members who, for reason of circumstances beyond their control, cannot be here. I would recommend that the motion be looked at tentatively by the Government.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair was anticipating the intervention of the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier). I wish to remind him and other Hon. Members that the Chair is presently preparing a ruling which touches on the concern of the Hon. Member and other Hon. Members. Until I am prepared to give judgment, I am following the usual procedure. I want to assure the Member for Ottawa—Vanier that I am conscious of his concerns.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, not to prolong this issue, but perhaps I could indicate to the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier that there are ongoing discussions with House Leaders on this matter. This issue has been raised. A solution has not been arrived at, but I assure the Hon. Member that it is being considered.