

Mr. Broadbent: —is the Prime Minister saying there are no options open to the government other than sitting back and witnessing the blockage of Parliament?

Mr. Hnatyshyn: You are a great kidder, Ed.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, it seems to me that when Parliament has ceased to work, and not through a filibuster, because as I understand it a filibuster is on a specific question, but has ceased to work period—

Mr. Andre: Call an election.

Mr. Trudeau: —we are in a situation of absolute disorder where the Parliament of Canada cannot work. It seems to me that the question should not be addressed to me, but to all members of this House. Is there some way in which disorder can be replaced by order?

Some hon. Members: Yes.

Mr. Clark: Adjourn the debate.

Mr. Trudeau: If that is the case, and the Leader of the Opposition nods in assent, I put it to you, Madam Speaker, perhaps you should call orders of the day forthwith and then we will get out of this hijacking process.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: Good idea.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, that is certainly something which this party would strongly support.

An hon. Member: Try again, Ed.

RULES GOVERNING PROCEDURE

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, my last supplementary question is for the government House leader.

Is the government House leader aware of any other rules in the rule book—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Ask Stanley.

Mr. Broadbent: —that would enable the government to take action to ensure there is a vote on the amendment which the Conservatives have had before the House for six weeks, stopping all other amendments from being brought forward? Is the government House leader aware of that? Is he prepared to take any steps to ensure that we obtain the amendments for our native people and for women, which the government itself has promised?

Presence in Gallery

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1440)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, the way the Standing Orders are drafted, an opposition party which is unsatisfied with a measure may, of course, resort to what is commonly known as a filibuster in parliamentary language. To put it another way, once the proposition has been introduced, that we have reached orders of the day and that it is debated, some hon. members prevent the question from being put, but by participating in the debate and constructively seeking to improve the measure.

However, there is a rule under which the government is allowed to propose changes to the existing Standing Orders with a view to ending a debate which, in this instance, has lasted for nearly six months. Under an even more drastic rule, we would be able to end it in less than 24 hours. Those are provisions contained in our Standing Orders and they can be used legitimately by the government. But there is a situation which is not covered in the Standing Orders, which does not belong to parliamentary practice and which is altogether improper and disrespectful to our institution and the Canadian people, and that is pure and simple disorder or any protracted filibuster which prevents the government from reaching the orders of the day and proceeding with the study of a given item. That is not what is commonly referred to as a filibuster, of which I spoke a moment ago. That is strictly a question of order or disorder, as the Right Hon. Prime Minister so aptly pointed out. In an even more popular language, it could be described as hijacking Parliament. Under the circumstances, Madam Speaker, when it amounts to a question of order or disorder you know full well that it is up to the occupant of the Chair to assume his or her responsibilities, as you have done so well until now and as we are confident you will continue to do.

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[*English*]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF GOVERNOR LICENCIADO MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ OF NUEVO LEON, MEXICO

Madam Speaker: I would like to draw the attention of the House to the presence in our gallery the Honourable Licenciado Martinez Dominguez, Governor of the State of Nuevo Leon, Mexico.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!