

Mr. Nielsen: Madam Speaker, I regret very much that that ruling was made without calling upon me for submissions to the Chair with respect to it.

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[Translation]

PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

ATTITUDE OF CERTAIN MEMBERS DURING VOTE IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Mr. Gaston Gourde (Lévis): Madam Speaker, today, the Progressive Conservatives played—

[English]

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Mr. Andre: Madam Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege.

Madam Speaker: Points of order or questions of privilege, by practice of this House, may be entertained at three o'clock, but not at this particular time.

[Translation]

Mr. Gourde: Madam Speaker, today the Progressive Conservatives played what I would call a rather childish game. Since they do not have the confidence of the Canadian people and are unable to win votes, they are trying—

[English]

Mr. Andre: Just a minute. What rule is that?

Mr. Nielsen: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Crosbie: The House is dissolved.

An Hon. Member: There is no such rule.

Mr. Beatty: Privilege—

Mr. Lawrence: I beg of you to hear us on a question of privilege affecting the constitutional usages and traditions of this House.

Madam Speaker: I have just reminded Hon. Members of the practice of the House. The practice of the House is that points of order and questions of privilege are delayed until after statements by Members and Question Period.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Madam Speaker: There are innumerable precedents to that effect, and my only guide—

Mr. Beatty: The procedure is unconstitutional.

Madam Speaker:—under these circumstances is the Standing Orders which tell me that at this time I must hear statements by Members. Hon. Members are asking me to rule on a constitutional matter. It is not up to the Chair to rule on

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constitutional matters. The Chair can only rule on procedural matters. Therefore, I recognize the Hon. Member for Lévis (Mr. Gourde).

[Translation]

Mr. Gourde: Madam Speaker, I am incredibly lucky in being able to make the longest S.O. 21 statement of my short career. Lacking the confidence of the Canadian people and the ability to win votes, the Progressive Conservatives are using all kinds of ploys to—

[English]

Mr. Andre: Point of order!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Point of order!

Mr. Nielsen: Point of order!

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

[Translation]

The Hon. Member for Lévis (Mr. Gourde) has the floor for a Member's statement, and that is the only subject the Chair may entertain at this time. The Hon. Member for Lévis.

Mr. Gourde: Madam Speaker, hardly an hour ago, the Progressive Conservatives tried to give the impression they had won a vote. I was here myself, however, and I saw fifty Progressive Conservative Members enter the House after a vote was called and the count had started. I am referring to the Progressive Conservative Members who were hiding behind the curtains and in the Opposition lobby. Madam Speaker, this attitude is intolerable.

[English]

Mr. Mulroney: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Mr. Andre: Point of order!

Mr. Mulroney: Madam Speaker, may I be heard on a statement?

[Translation]

Madam Speaker: Order. The Hon. Member for Lévis has the floor. I have recognized the Hon. Member for Lévis. As soon as he finishes his statement—

[English]

Mr. Nielsen: The leader of the Opposition (Mr. Mulroney) wishes to make a statement.

Madam Speaker: Exactly, but the Hon. Member for Lévis already has the floor. I would be very happy to listen to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition on a statement once I have heard the Hon. Member for Lévis.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!