

further, following which I shall be in a position to reach a decision.

Apparently the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre does not wish to pursue the argument he was making last night.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, the reason for my not rising is that the argument that I was putting forward last night had to do with the motion moved by the President of the Privy Council. I contended that whatever authority the house might have given to the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization to bring back a proposal, it did not give such authority to the President of the Privy Council. That was the argument I was making last night.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre obviously is correct and he is confirming what I was suggesting a moment ago. Whatever validity his argument might have had yesterday, it loses much of its strength in view of the fact that what the house is now doing is considering a motion by the chairman of the committee on the instructions of the house itself. I think this would have to be my ruling on the point of order that was raised last evening.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I have a moment to thank you for saying that I was correct in my argument last night. It is good to have that on the record.

Mr. McCleave: Mr. Speaker, may I speak very briefly to the point of order that has arisen and ask the President of the Privy Council whether it is his intention or the intention of any member of the ministry to bring in an amendment to the report that is going to be presented to us?

Mr. Speaker: That is not a point of order. The hon. member for Grenville-Carleton has the floor.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Skeena on a point of order.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, may I raise a matter that I think deserves some consideration by the house. The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development has been active in a safari to certain parts of western Canada. There exists in Canada at

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the moment a very strong, growing discontent among the native Indian people about the policy of this government. I wonder if, in order that we can get on—

● (2:20 p.m.)

Some hon. Members: Order, order.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Hon. members can yell, "Order" all they like, but the native Indian people of this country don't give a damn what those hon. members think. They are concerned about realities. I will put the matter in the form of a request. I wonder if the Prime Minister would consider allowing us to have an oral question period, in order that some of these very important matters may be raised. If they are not to be raised, Mr. Speaker, we may have some tribal wars in this nation.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Our people are not playing games, as hon. members will find out for themselves.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, although Your Honour has ruled on the second point of order that was raised, because of changed circumstances arising from the fact that the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Blair) now wishes to proceed with the report of the committee, may I put before Your Honour another point of order which I ask Your Honour to consider and, hopefully, which all hon. members of the house including hon. members on the other side may also consider. My point involves, Mr. Speaker, the whole question of the validity of the government's right to proceed as it has been, in an attempt to change or add to the rules of this house. Before Your Honour considers the substantial magnitude of our objection I seek to place before Your Honour some arguments arising out of constitutional implications which Your Honour may take under cognizance.

In the first place, I submit that proposed rule 75A as reported by the committee is invalid. The invalidity taints the remainder of proposed standing order 75. May I draw Your Honour's attention to sections 48 and 49 of the British North America Act which read as follows:

48. The presence of at least twenty members of the House of Commons shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the house for the Exercise of its powers; and for that purpose the Speaker shall be reckoned as a member.