

Government Orders

I refer to Beauchesne's 621, the fifth edition, in order to remind the House and the Speaker of that particular rule.

Mr. Hawkes: I think perhaps the deputy House leader on the other side misspoke himself slightly. There is no rule 621. In the latter part, he said it was a citation from Beauchesne's. In fact, we have only 159 rules, which some days seems like quite a lot, and others may be not quite enough.

The committee is trying to move through a series of motions to set their agenda and set the work pattern to meet the terms of reference of the House of Commons.

There was a motion yesterday which was defeated. There are other motions on the table that need to be discussed and then decided upon. Then they will be able to get on with their work. That is all we are dealing with.

• (1130)

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member has brought a matter to the Chair and to the Chamber. It is clear that there is some disagreement in the committee, but I have to accept the assertion of the hon. member for Calgary West that the committee is trying to deal with that matter. I think as long as that is going on, that is where the discussion here today should end.

I am mindful of the citations which the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell has raised and the comments of the hon. member for Calgary West, but I am looking primarily at the comments raised by our colleague from British Columbia, the hon. member for North Island—Powell River. What he has in effect said—although it came as a point of privilege, it is more probably a point of order—is that he is asking the Chair if there is some way the Chair could help to facilitate the ongoing work of the committee. I think that is the very calm and reasoned way that the hon. member put the matter to the House.

It just might be that, because we have had this discussion, it might in itself help facilitate the working of the committee. The hon. member for Calgary West, who is the Whip for the government, seems to be of the view that the matter can be resolved. I think that at least for today that is where we should leave it.

I hope the hon. members can make the committee work, because, as I said before, it is seized of an order from this House, which was a consent order, and there was complete agreement in it. As both sides of the House have clearly indicated, it is a matter of very great concern to the House and to the country.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BILL C-80

REFERENCE OF SUBJECT MATTER TO SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada) moved:

That a Special Committee of the House of Commons be appointed to study the subject matter of Bill C-80, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the Customs Tariff in consequence thereof;

That the said Special Committee shall have all the powers of a Standing Committee pursuant to Standing Order 108(1); and

That the said Special Committee be composed of eight members, to be recommended by the Striking Committee.

Mr. Waddell: I rise on a point of order, Madam Speaker, and it is this. There is a motion by the government to refer Bill C-80, the proposed gun control legislation, to a committee for pre-study. There is also on the *Order Paper* Bill C-80 itself, as a government bill, for second reading, which is approval in principle.

On behalf of my party, I say to the minister we are prepared to put up one speaker on Bill C-80. We will deal with the real thing, the bill. I cannot speak for the Liberal Party, but I noticed before that the Liberal Party was prepared to proceed with the matter. We could proceed with the government bill, refer it to committee, and then any amendments or any witnesses can be heard in the committee.

I know the minister has committed herself. She said right after the massacre at the École Polytechnique in Montreal last December 6 that she was committed to improving gun control legislation in the country. The government did bring down a bill, which is this Bill C-80. I want to say to the minister on behalf of my party that we are prepared to deal with the bill. We can deal with it