

[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: And I go on quoting the facts which are on record:

AND WHEREAS the motion of the Minister of Justice implementing the joint committee's recommendation was moved on February 17, 1981:

The Minister of Justice moved a motion implementing the recommendation of the joint committee, and that appears in the recorded proceedings.

AND WHEREAS the hon. member for Provencher moved an amendment to that motion on February 17, 1981:

That is not an argument, it is simply taking note of facts which once again are on record. And finally:

AND WHEREAS the said amendment has been debated by this House for some five weeks, with the result that as of March 18, 1981, there have been 52 speakers on behalf of the official opposition, 15 speakers on behalf of the New Democratic Party, and 31 speakers on behalf of the government;

Here again that is on the record. I even have the number of minutes during which the proceedings lasted. The official opposition spoke twice as long as the Liberal Party, they have so far devoted more than 55 hours to this debate on third reading.

But those are not arguments. It is not for the purpose of argument or debate that such things are alleged; we are taking note of the reality and of the facts which are recorded in the *Votes and Proceedings* of the House. Therefore in no way does that run counter to Beauchesne's Citation 423, or Citation 184 of the fourth edition as my colleague from Saskatoon West claims. Nor does it fly in the face of the ruling made by Mr. Michener because each case stands on its own merits and we are not dealing here with an amendment but with the main motion. The preamble here is not argumentative, it simply relates the proceedings before the committee and the House. So what is left of the substance of the arguments raised by the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton? He states that our motion is self-contradictory because it provides that Standing Order 40 be suspended, whereas Section (7) of that order stipulates that when there is a special order of the House, Standing Order 40 shall be suspended. On the contrary, I fail to understand why he should make such a statement. The special order we are seeking does not apply solely to Section (7) of Standing Order 40, that is not hard to understand, it applies to Standing Order 40 as a whole.

Now then, a little further on Section (7) of Standing Order 40 gains even more weight. We did not have to say that, and I agree with him. We did not have to specify that there would be no adjournment debate, all we had to do was to ask to sit beyond normal hours and, pursuant to Standing Order 40(7), there can be no adjournment debate. That is what it says in Section (7).

But our motion does not provide that Standing Order 40(7) be suspended. It says that Standing Order 40 as a whole will not apply. Standing Order 40 deals with adjournment proceedings. That is the way we tried to make it more certain that

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there would be no adjournment debate; there is nothing contradictory in that, it is for emphasis, it goes even further.

So, as an argument to have us put our motion aside, it is not very convincing, it is not the find of the century, Madam Speaker.

There is also a third argument, Citation 411. I have read and reread it and, frankly, I must say that the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton has not proven to me how that citation could prevent us from moving on that motion, except that I retain this part of it, and I quote:

No motion is regularly before the House until it has been read by the Chair. Then it may be debated, amended, superseded, adopted, negated or withdrawn, as the House may decide.

That is what Beauchesne says. And if we were to give it a literal interpretation, we could not hold the debate now in progress until the motion is put. This shows that Beauchesne's citations are not always observed. So, this is what I read in Citation 411.

I say it once again. No motion is regularly before the House until it has been read by the Chair; only then it may be debated.

Finally, as mentioned by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, according to Citation 311 we cannot table written speeches because this is against tradition.

Madam Speaker, there are many democratic countries in the world where written speeches can be tabled and those are not totalitarian states. One has only to look at what is going on in Washington; but regardless of the fact that written speeches can be tabled in several other democratic countries, if ever there was an independent country, it is the United States, and the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) will have to admit it.

• (2150)

Madam Speaker, there is a tradition here in this House that written speeches cannot be tabled. That is actually a fact. But as I said earlier in my speech, traditions are there to be changed. Madam Speaker, our parliamentary tradition has been a continuously changing process and Beauchesne does not say that in the future it will not be possible to table speeches, but simply says that up to now according to our practice, that is not acceptable.

But once again, we can change tradition by introducing written rules, sessional or special orders. Traditions may be subjected to any one of those three kinds of changes I mentioned earlier. And because we propose that a simple majority of the members in this House do pass a special order to allow honourable members to table written speeches, I would say that this is not against Beauchesne. Beauchesne's citations record the past, but do not close the door to evolution nor to future changes.