

*Tabling of Documents*

● (1150)

However, the Hon. Member for Windsor West makes an excellent point. I am grateful to him for clarifying it and am grateful because I now see more clearly the point that the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier was making.

**Mr. Gauthier:** That's what I was trying to say, you interrupted me.

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry):** Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, if I might I would like to go back to the explanation of the Chair concerning the point of privilege raised by my colleague from Windsor West. I believe it did contain some elements of ambiguity which, in the context of this issue, could very much affect public debate.

As I understand the Speaker's ruling, he is suggesting that he is not prepared to entertain full argument on this point until such time as, through government business, the House brings the order forward.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Chair is saying that certainly at the moment I do not see it as a point of privilege. However, when this matter comes back before the House, if indeed it does, I will, of course, hear full and complete argument on the matter. If I can then be persuaded that there is, in addition to what I think is very clearly a point order, some additional matter to be argued on a point of privilege, I will hear that argument at that time. At the present time I take this matter more as a point of order than as a point of privilege.

However, in arguing a point of order it may very well be that part of the argument is to refer, in general terms, to the privileges of Hon. Members. As I understand the argument that has been put to the Chair this morning by both the Hon. Member for Windsor West and the Hon. Member for Oshawa it is that the House has agreed to a set of orders. The Government is proposing that those orders be changed with respect to a specific matter.

There is the argument, as I understood it, that not only ought this not be procedurally acceptable to the Chair but that it is not acceptable to Hon. Members and it may well get into a question of privilege. At the moment I am not prepared to say that it is but, as I have made clear, I will hear full argument if it is appropriate, under the circumstances, to come back and listen to this again. However, that, as I said, is premature at the moment.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to comment very briefly on your use of language one minute ago. You indicated that there was objection from our side of the House relating to privileges of Members on the grounds that the Government was proposing to change the rules. I rise to be quite precise about what I said. My objection was that the Government is proposing to suspend the rules. Whatever one might say about the legitimacy of using the majority after debate to change the rules in the House, the point at hand is, in my judgment, fundamentally different. They are invoking a procedure which

was last used 105 years ago to suspend the rules of Parliament. That, Your Honour, is the point that I see is involved in the question of privilege.

**Mr. Speaker:** I will hear the Hon. Member for Windsor West, but perhaps I could respond to that. I will, of course, consider very carefully the words which the Hon. Member used. In trying to summarize a longer and very explicit argument, I do not want to take away in any way the import of those words. I would like to close off this part of this morning's business. I will hear the Hon. Member for Windsor West for a moment.

**Mr. Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to confirm that the argument I presented to you earlier this morning was with respect to the Government's effort to suspend the rules arbitrarily with respect to one matter before the House rather than an effort by the Government to make an over-all change in the rules after proper debate and, if necessary, a vote.

I am dealing specifically and particularly with the Government's motion which is very clearly for the purpose of suspending the rules and the usual practices of the House when it comes to the one matter that it wants the House to deal with in a way which is not within the ordinary Standing Orders, that is, the question of abortion. My remarks were not aimed in any way at what is appropriate or what is not appropriate with respect to an over-all, permanent change in the rules.

**Mr. Speaker:** I think I have understood both the Hon. Member for Windsor West and the Hon. Member for Oshawa clearly. While there is a complaint about the Government's Notice of Motion, it is not a complaint that says, in effect, that the Government is trying to change all the rules of this place. As I understand it, whether we say "suspend" or "change" or "suspend and change", depending on the context in which it is used, it is referring specifically to this single motion. That is my understanding and that is the basis upon which I will proceed.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### POINT OF ORDER

#### TABLING OF DOCUMENTS CITED

**Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order with respect to the section of our Standing Orders which refers to Tabling of Documents. I want to raise again the point of order which I raised on Friday. It has now been possible to look at the actual detailed comments within *Hansard* with respect to the document with which the Hon. Minister for International Trade (Mr. Crosbie) dealt. If I recall that discussion correctly, the question was whether we were dealing with referring to a document, citing a document, or quoting a document.