

There are three relevant Standing Orders here. The most important is Standing Order 50 to which the Speaker herself referred. That Standing Order talks about a question being under debate and then refers to a series of possible motions which might be received under appropriate circumstances. One of those motions is to read the Orders of the Day. Yet another motion is to proceed to another Order, including Orders of the Day.

There is a point which has not yet been raised but one which I believe is very important in the context of what the Government House Leader has said. The Government House Leader referred to Standing Order 28. Standing Order 28 refers to a motion for reading the Orders of the Day which shall have preference to any motion before the House. The fact of the matter is that that was not the motion that was before the House yesterday. Why the Government House Leader would make reference to Standing Order 28 which refers to a motion for reading the Orders of the Day, and then go on to refer to a citation from Beauchesne, which also refers to a motion for reading the Orders of the Day, I do not know. With respect, that is completely irrelevant.

That was not the motion before the House yesterday. The motion before the House yesterday was that the House do now proceed to Orders of the Day, not that Orders of the Day be read. How the Government House Leader can argue that a motion which refers to reading the Orders of the Day somehow applies to a motion that refers to proceedings of the Orders of the Day, which is also entirely separate and comes under Standing Order 50, when both are distinct and separate motions, is certainly beyond me. I suggest, Madam Speaker, that any purported reliance on Standing Order 28 is entirely without foundation.

The final point is once more with respect to Standing Order 50. Standing Order 50, as has been noted by a number of my colleagues, starts out with the words "When a question is under debate". Madam Speaker rose at one point to indicate in response to a submission from my colleague from Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) that there was no real issue in terms of the Speaker's earlier ruling on the question of debate, that she merely indicated that there should not be debate. With respect, the issue goes beyond that. Standing Order 71(3) does not leave any discretion. It indicates very clearly:

● (1540)

On the presentation of a petition no debate on or in relation to the same shall be allowed.

How could it possibly be argued that Standing Order 50, which refers to a question being under debate, is relevant when pursuant to Standing Order 71(3) there can be no debate? Therefore I suggest that Standing Order 28 is not relevant in the circumstances because that was not the motion on the floor. Standing Order 50 is not relevant because there was no question under debate. We were dealing with petitions which pursuant to the Standing Orders cannot be debated.

*Point of Order—Mr. Deans*

I strongly urge you, Madam Speaker, to recognize that what was attempted yesterday was an undermining of the parliamentary process itself which must not be allowed to be repeated.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques):** Madam Speaker, I do hope that when you announce your decision in a few moments you will act as you did on many previous occasions, namely render your ruling not only in keeping with the intent of the Standing Orders, but also in light of the circumstances surrounding the events.

Upon hearing the arguments just made by some of my colleagues opposite, a visitor in the gallery might come to the conclusion that someone on this side of the House is attempting to question the right of any Member to present a petition. Obviously, such is not the case.

As the Hon. Member for Dauphin-Swan River (Mr. Lewycky) has said, the privilege of presenting a petition is one that I have as much as he has, as have all other Members in the House.

However, what some Members may object to and, in my opinion, what Your Honour must object to, is the abuse of that privilege. In addition to the number of Members who rose yesterday to present petitions, we now have a few who take the floor today to shed tears over the fact that, unfortunately, they were deprived of that privilege. Since I simply want to prove my point—

**Mr. Deans:** Be honest!

**Mr. Guilbault:** Ah, that hurts. I guess it hurts, because they are trying to prevent me from speaking.

I must point out that when someone imputed motives to the Government a moment ago, when the Member opposite said that the Government was trying to do away with Routine Proceedings, they were on a witch hunt. The Hon. Member who is at fault wants to blame somebody on this side of the House, and that is quite amusing. They impute motives to the Government, and yet yesterday they did try to delay the business of the House.

What I am asking you, Madam Speaker—and I am convinced that you can and that it is your duty indeed to do so—is that in your interpretation of the Standing Orders you do not take into consideration the academic arguments which were made earlier about the Standing Orders without reference to the circumstances, but on the contrary that you keep in mind as well the incidents which have occurred when the situation first came up. You cannot really make a judgment without keeping the circumstances in mind and concluding that even what is going on today could be interpreted by some Members, including myself, as being an attempt to slow down the debate and keep us from reaching the Orders of the Day. Some Members want to pursue the debate and proceed with Government Orders.