

Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) publicly chastised Your Honour—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):—and put you in the position where you seemed to feel you should listen to debate on a point on which you had already ruled.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: Right on.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I submit, sympathetic though I may be with the other view, and even though I may disagree with your ruling, that the question of your authority is far more important.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): For many years in this House, Speakers' rulings could be challenged and we had lengthy debates on them. But this House formally and deliberately changed Standing Order 12, so that it now reads in part:

No debate shall be permitted on any such decision, and no such decision shall be subject to an appeal to the House.

To say we are having friendly discussion of something that members did not know was going to happen does not get around the fact that what is happening today is that a decision of the Chair is being appealed. I bring to Your Honour's attention, also, the fact that in *Beauchesne's* fourth edition there are three comments on this point. The first sentence of citation 72—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I very much appreciate the intervention of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) whose reputation as a parliamentarian is so well known. I must say, however, that to put the interpretation on this afternoon's discussion that it represents an appeal or an affront to the Chair would scarcely be a fair interpretation.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: I have outlined the view I have taken this afternoon and the view I propose to take throughout this session in respect of parliamentary secretaries asking questions during the question period. I have taken that position, and it is clear. That is my view. In addition to doing that, I made it very clear that I was interested in hearing representations from hon. members and I invited that kind of discussion. The discussion could scarcely be classified in the context of an appeal or in any way challenging the Chair. I am sure it was not intended that way by hon. members.

I have taken this matter under extremely careful consideration for a long time, not only for the short time I have been in the chair but during the two years I was a parliamentary secretary. It is not a matter I have considered lightly; it is one on which I have taken a clear and definitive decision. Parliamentary secretaries who continue to rise during the question period wonder, I am sure, why they are not recognized. I think it fair to take this opportunity to make my position clear. Having done so, I

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think it would probably be better to get on with orders of the day.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles).

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, since I have already contended that your rulings must be accepted, I have to accept the opinion you have now stated, that what we are engaging in is not an appeal against your ruling. I submit, however, that since this place operates by precedent, this discussion today sets a precedent for future action. Any time a member, especially a cabinet minister, is dissatisfied with your ruling, he can stand and say, "Your Honour, I am not appealing but I want you to listen". I contend that the House Leader or the Minister of Finance cannot in this way criticize what you have done. *Beauchesne's* fourth edition, citation 72(1), gives the answer when it says:

The Speaker's actions cannot be criticized incidentally in debate or upon any form of proceeding except a substantive motion.

There are other sentences in that citation. The final sentence of citation 72(2) is especially important with reference to the Speaker. It reads:

His prestige would be seriously impaired if he allowed himself to argue with members on the soundness of his decisions.

And subsection (3) reads:

If a member wishes to challenge the action or conduct of the Speaker on any matter other than an appeal from his decision—

The argument now is that it is something other than an appeal.

—he must proceed by giving two days' notice of a motion on the subject and by bringing the matter up as a separate question, except, of course, if it be a question of privilege, when it may be taken up as such.

The other brief comment I wish to make is this. In accordance with the law and the arrangement we made, this is to be a day of debate on a matter which is of concern to many members of this House—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):—but the President of the Privy Council and the Minister of Finance have denied us 40 minutes of debate on that important measure, by their interventions.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner).

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I am grateful for your interpretation of the procedures that have gone on for the last 20 minutes. I want to say, through you, to the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) and the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) that I rose—indeed, the leader of the House rose on even more specific terms—to inquire of Your Honour whether it was a firm ruling and hoping—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!