

*Points of Order***POINTS OF ORDER**

WITHDRAWAL OF COMMENT

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, obviously I have not had a chance to see the "blues" yet, but if I have inadvertently alleged that the former minister for External Trade had accepted the \$20,000 as a pay-off I fully withdraw that remark.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I appreciate that withdrawal, but I thought it should have been a more fulsome withdrawal, because as I heard Mr. Speaker ask for a withdrawal—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. government House leader has the floor.

Mr. Andre: I heard Mr. Speaker during Question Period ask for the withdrawal of a question that as I heard it would have been slanderous if uttered outside this institution. I then heard no withdrawal but heard another question being put.

I humbly submit if slander is to be permitted and after the fact later one can impart "if I said something inadvertently" and then go on to ask questions, that behaviour will be carried on in perpetuity.

I humbly ask that if we are to restore to this institution a reputation we all say it needs, perhaps we should be a little more willing to admit transgressions, more immediate in our withdrawals, and less willing to slander in this institution in a way that would be subject to court action if done outside this institution.

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, just on the point of decorum, I think the government House leader should be aware of the fact that while he was thrusting and jousting with the NDP his colleague, the Minister of Justice, characterized another NDP member as slimy. The former Minister of Finance told me to go back to kindergarten.

It seems to me that when we are talking about decorum the use of words like slimy and kindergarten really do not have a place here either.

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, this is a charter member of the rat pack who in her own book says: "I have a big mouth"—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. government House leader has risen on the point of order in which the hon. member for Kamloops made a withdrawal. The hon. government House leader has made a comment. Does the hon. government House leader wish the floor further?

Mr. Andre: I happen to sit right in front of the Minister of Justice and I did not hear the accusation, the word that the member for Hamilton East attributed to her, and in her absence I wanted to make the point that was not said.

Perhaps we should remind ourselves of the kinds of things people are saying around the country about our behaviour and remind ourselves that yesterday there was a very serious and important debate in this House about decorum based on a motion which was unanimously passed by the House in terms of the behaviour of the member for Port Moody—Coquitlam. Yet we unanimously pass that motion in the House, leave this House, go outside and immediately condemn this House for its decision.

That is the kind of thing we have to stop doing if we want to bring respect to this institution and to members of Parliament who try to represent their constituents here.

REQUEST FOR STATEMENT

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order to ask the government if it would consider making a statement on the terrible air crash in northern Canada. A number of members have concerned constituents and we would like to have some information about it.

If the government is not in a position to make that statement now, could it undertake to do so if information is available before the House adjourns this afternoon?

Hon. Mary Collins (Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister responsible for Status of Women): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the concern expressed by the member. I know it is a concern shared by all members of