

*Privilege—Ms. Copps***PRIVILEGE**

REQUEST FOR WITHDRAWAL OF ALLEGED SEXIST REMARK

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to have to rise for a second time in a week in the House and ask government Members, and in particular the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson), to withdraw the sexist remarks he and members of his Party have made two times in one week.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Copps: The House Leader may not consider this a question of privilege. I consider it a question of privilege when the women of Canada are insulted by terms such as “baby”.

I would ask you, Mr. Speaker—and I have forwarded a letter to the Chair to this effect—in light of the fact that we are living in 1985 and such sexist terms are not acceptable in the House of Commons, to order the Minister of Finance to withdraw the statements he made, which included the words, “Get out, baby”. I am not his baby. I am not the baby of any Member on the government side of the House.

Some Hon. Members: Order.

Ms. Copps: I am sorry that the members of the Conservative Party think it is a big joke to call other Members of this place “baby”. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to rule that the Minister finally and unequivocally remove the word “baby” from the House of Commons.

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would never use a word such as that unless properly provoked. The Hon. Member used the word *menteur* three times in referring to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). That means, in English, liar, liar, liar. The Hon. Member knows that and she will not deny it.

Ms. Copps: I do not deny it.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): She says she will not deny it.

Any time a Member of the House uses that sort of language, that Member loses the total respect of the House. After that point in time, whatever language is used in connection with the Member goes. I do not take back what I said.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) has stated a proposition which simply cannot be accepted. Even if hypothetically one Hon. Member uses unparliamentary language, it does not justify another Hon. Member's use of unparliamentary language, especially when the Minister of Finance has used language which is not only an insult to a distinguished Member of this House—

Some Hon. Members: Who? Who?

Mr. Gray (Windsor West):—but to all women of Canada.

Mr. Speaker: I did not hear the comments which the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) said the Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps) made.

An Hon. Member: She admitted it!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

I did not hear the comments the Hon. Member for Hamilton East says the Minister of Finance said. There is a simple reason for that, which is that it is often difficult for me to hear during Question Period in the House.

The Hon. Member for Hamilton East has sent me a letter with respect to this matter. There is no question in my mind that sexist remarks are objectionable. However, there is some question in my mind as to whether or not the fact that they are objectionable makes them unparliamentary. Equally, there is no question that language which the House generally finds objectionable tends to cause disorder, which then brings us into the area of order, the use of language, and the creation of disorder through language, which is a separate matter.

Under the circumstances, having recognized the seriousness with which Hon. Members have taken this point in their comments, I think we all have an obligation to each other—males to females, females to males, Liberals to Conservatives, NDP to all of us and everybody to the NDP—to bring our language into check and to remember that this is the House of Commons of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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POINTS OF ORDER

REQUEST FOR TABLING OF DOCUMENT CITED

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I asked that a document from which the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) quoted be tabled. I understand the Government's reply to that request is to refer to a letter of former Prime Minister Trudeau which has been tabled in 1984. I rise because the letter from Mr. Trudeau is not the document which I was asking to have tabled. I was asking to have tabled the document from which the Prime Minister was quoting.

Yesterday, the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Hnatyshyn) said, as reported at page 5490 of *Hansard*:

Mr. Speaker, I am not one to peer over the Prime Minister's shoulder, but that was a separate document altogether, with an extract. It was not a letter.

In other words, the document before the Prime Minister was not a letter; it was a document that I gather contained an extract from former Prime Minister Trudeau's letter. According to Beauchesne, Members of the House are entitled to have tabled the document from which the Prime Minister was reading yesterday.

Mr. Speaker: Beauchesne is very clear on this point. In fact, I can quote it from memory:

Only the document cited need to be tabled by a Minister.