

Point of Order

The hon. member has put the complaint forward with vigour. Perhaps following this complaint some conversations might take place between hon. members on both sides of the House.

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• (1510)

POINT OF ORDER**COMMENT DURING QUESTION PERIOD**

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I rise now on a point of order. The point I want to make has nothing to do with the previous one.

It is a point of order that arose during Question Period. I do not want to appear to be objecting on behalf of any member, but in the course of Question Period during a question being put by the hon. member for Edmonton East I heard some members on the government side, and I cannot identify them so I do not think it is a question of privilege, refer to the hon. member who had the floor as a "windbag".

I have been called that before in this House. I have checked the precedents. I have looked at Beauchesne, Sixth Edition, citation 488 which states:

It has been ruled unparliamentary to refer to a member as:

(c) a bag of wind.

It cites a precedent of February 15, 1878, which I have here and would be pleased to provide Your Honour.

In my submission a "bag of wind" and a "windbag" are one and the same. I suggest that the term is unparliamentary. I ask that Your Honour consider the matter and if it is unparliamentary and so rule, then I will object the next time it is used. I am not objecting for myself in this particular case, although I have been called that. I could identify the hon. member who has used that unparliamentary expression in reference to some of my perhaps longer speeches in this House. I will not say long-winded speeches, but certainly perhaps longer speeches.

I would ask Your Honour to consider the matter and if windbag is in fact unparliamentary, perhaps its use could be discontinued in the Chamber. I know all hon. members would not want to use unparliamentary terms.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands has raised a crucial point in the long history of parliamentary or unparliamentary language.

The hon. member advises the Chair, and I have no reason to disbelieve him, that when another hon. member was up some other hon. member, unidentified, referred to him as a windbag. The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands has pointed out that "bag of wind" has been referred to as unparliamentary and that it ought to be equated with windbag.

"Bag of wind" has also been used as a synonym for the Scottish pipes. Of course I would have to say that if it was used in that context, given my own ancestry, it would be completely and utterly parliamentary.

However, I must incline to the view that under the circumstances in which it was apparently given today, I think it certainly does border on the unparliamentary. It might be that some discussion could take place in the appropriate lobby. If it can be found who uttered this affront, perhaps he or she could be persuaded to come in front of the House and eventually withdraw it.

There is no question in my mind that we are bound by precedent under certain circumstances. The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands whose sharp ears picked up this exchange has given considerable assistance to the Chair.

I hope that all hon. members would refrain from referring to other hon. members as either a bag of wind or a windbag, especially because we would not want confusion with Scottish pipes.

I thank all hon. members.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I merely want to take this opportunity to use the other official language and inform you that Beauchesne's, Fifth Edition, makes an important point, because many Canadians listening today probably don't understand what is meant by a "bag of wind" or a "windbag". I may refer them to Beauchesne's, citation 320, which says in the French edition that the following list is a more or less complete collection of various expressions that have been ruled unparliamentary in the House since over a century ago. Used in English, they do not always take the same form or have the same undesirable impact in their official translation.