

*Point of Order—Mr. Blaikie*

**Mr. Speaker:** I must advise Hon. Members that that concludes Question Period. I will hear the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie) on a point of order and then I will hear the Hon. Member for Mount Royal (Mrs. Finestone) on a point of order.

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**POINTS OF ORDER****NCC USE OF HERBICIDES ON LAWNS OF PARLIAMENT HILL**

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise a point of order with respect to the way in which the National Capital Commission has really thumbed its nose at the House of Commons by going ahead with the use of herbicides on the Parliamentary lawn against the all-party recommendations of Mr. Speaker, the environment critic of the Liberal Party, the environment critic of the New Democratic Party and other Members of Parliament who joined together in asking the National Capital Commission, in writing to Mrs. Pigott, the Chairman of the National Capital Commission, not to do this.

I noticed that some people thought this was a bit of a joke when it was raised by the Hon. Member for Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands (Mr. Manly). I noticed the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp) laughing. He is the last person on earth who should be laughing at this kind of matter. This is a matter which has been taken seriously by both sides of the House of Commons.

We should take it seriously for two reasons. First, it concerns the environmental question, both as to the effects of the herbicide used and also because we would like Parliament Hill to be an environmental example, if you will, and it certainly does not appear to be any kind of ecological example with little yellow signs all around the Hill saying you had better stay off the grass, not in order to keep the grass well, but to stay well yourself.

I think this is offensive both on environmental grounds and on the grounds that were established by the recommendations of the McGrath report which said that Parliament should have more control over its own life and over its own environs. We recommended at the time that a parliamentary intendant be appointed and that the House of Commons have more control over its own precincts.

We tried in a nice negotiable sort of way to get the National Capital Commission not to do something which everyone agreed it should not be doing, and it basically told us to go to hell. That is what it did. It put that stuff all over the lawn here in spite of the objections of Members of Parliament, in spite of the will of Mr. Speaker, in spite of the collective will of the environmental critics and others who expressed a similar concern.

I think this points up the problem we have on Parliament Hill. We are not even in control of our lives here, of our own environs. We pretend to be running the country but we cannot even get the National Capital Commission not to dump poisons on our own lawn after we have asked it not to do so.

I would hope that you, Mr. Speaker, would send a very strong message to the National Capital Commission on behalf of Members of the House of Commons, that we find it offensive in the extreme that, against the recommendations made to it, it has gone ahead and done this.

I hope all Members will use this as an occasion to reflect on the need for the implementation of the recommendations of the McGrath report, the Special Committee on Parliamentary Reform for a structure through which we have more control over our own environs and are not subjected to this kind of offensive action, and previous offensive actions, such as the time we wandered out one morning to find that everything had been dug up in order to facilitate the light show. That was done without the knowledge of the Speaker of the day. These kinds of offences continue to happen and it is about time they stopped.

**Mr. Speaker:** Perhaps I could just advise Hon. Members that the Speaker is in a bit of an unusual situation here because, as the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie) has pointed out that this matter has been a matter of discussion among Members, brought to the attention of the Speaker, and there have been responses from myself with respect to this and other environmental considerations of the Hill.

I think I should make it clear that certainly these kinds of matters are matters which have been brought to the attention of the Chair by Members of all parties. Perhaps it is advisable if the Chair just makes that clear to the House.

**Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of State and Minister of State (Treasury Board)):** Mr. Speaker, I am simply going to suggest that the Board of Internal Economy may wish to take another look at the complaint of my hon. friend, which he raises at the first available opportunity, and with a great deal of vigor. I know he is concerned about the environment in this particular matter and I can do no more than to suggest that is a very appropriate matter to be discussed by the Board of Internal Economy.

**Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport):** I am not so sure that is the best approach. You, Mr. Speaker, gave us great leadership when on May 29 you wrote a letter to Madam Pigott of the National Capital Commission on this matter. We were extremely grateful to you, Mr. Speaker, for having taken in hand a matter which, as the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie) states, is intended to regain control of the Hill, by the Parliament, with respect to the kind of environment we have, making it into a model for other jurisdictions to see.