

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of Mr. Vilém Holan, Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

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POINTS OF ORDER

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today on a point of order following the Prime Minister's comments during question period yesterday on the results of the election of the Speaker.

Standing Order 3(6) states:

The Clerk of the House shall, once all members wishing to do so have deposited their ballot papers, empty the box and count the ballots and being satisfied as to the accuracy of the count, shall destroy the ballots together with all records of the number of ballots cast for each candidate and the Clerk of the House shall in no way divulge the number of ballots cast for any candidate.

In reference to the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier, the Prime Minister stated yesterday, and I quote from page 8170 of *Hansard*:

—Mr. Speaker, that it was by two votes he did not become the Speaker. A lot of people thought we had two great candidates and he lost by only two votes.

In so doing the Prime Minister left the impression that he was in possession of information that is supposed to be secret. By making these comments the Prime Minister has called the whole process into question. I merely want to ensure that the rules of the House were adhered to and that the Standing Orders were not compromised.

I would therefore ask the Prime Minister if his comments were purely—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: I take the point of order seriously.

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in his absence the Prime Minister asked me to transmit to the House that he was basically reflecting on the fact there were two votes. I think everybody who watched the votes in the House that day realized there were actually two votes.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: I do not want to get into a debate on the particular matter. Is the hon. member rising on the same point of order?

Business of the House

Mr. Hermanson: Mr. Speaker, even in your own response which is also recorded in *Hansard* you said—and I am not quoting exactly—that this was the first time you realized how many votes you won by.

Obviously the Prime Minister needs to do some explaining in the House.

The Speaker: Order. Of course I should not have intervened like that. What really surprised me is that I have not met a member yet who has not voted for me.

I will take both statements under advisement and if it is necessary I will come back to the House.

• (1505)

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, in Statements by Members under Standing Order 31 the hon. member for Vancouver South said that the leader of the Reform Party should apologize for misleading Canadians.

Under citation 489 of *Beauchesne's* it is unparliamentary language to use the words misleading the public. I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that you also rule in this case and perhaps ask the member to withdraw his statement.

The Speaker: I will have a look at the blues. Generally speaking the word misleading could be inadvertent. If we use the words deliberately misleading they would surely be out of order. I will review the blues.

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[*Translation*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my hon. colleague, the Secretary of State, the usual question put to him on Thursdays as to what the legislative agenda will be for the next few days?

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, and tomorrow if necessary, we will pursue consideration at report stage of Bill C-57, the World Trade Organization Implementation Act.

[*English*]

We will follow this with report and third reading stages of Bill C-55, the Yukon surface rights legislation.

Since early autumn the Standing Committee on Finance has been conducting for the first time in history formal public prebudget consultations. On Monday and Wednesday next week members of the House will have the opportunity of making their own contributions to the work of the committee. They will be