

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Simmons: Keep him in order too. What a hypocrite.

• (1020)

Mr. Speaker: There is no pleasure in being Speaker and having to give lectures. There probably is a limit to how useful it is but I have to ask for the support of all members. At the moment I am asking members to comply very carefully with the best traditions of this place and let the hon. minister give his remarks. If the hon. member for Burin—St. George's wishes to respond, he can seek the floor.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, I think that my earlier intervention which was driven by quite an uncharacteristic loss of my temper was unhelpful to the House. I regret that. I certainly believe that we are moving dangerously close to a practice that could be disruptive to the long-standing order of the House. I would hope that both in the Chair's deliberations and in the decisions members on all sides of the House have to take about this matter that we will not give standing to a practice which might allow me to attribute to the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre, for example, some words he did not say and then impose upon him an obligation of denial. This has not been the practice of the House and certainly it is not one we should begin.

Mr. Dingwall: Mr. Speaker, we can proceed with business of the day forthwith. I do not suggest in any way that members on one side are more correct than members on the other. I say to the minister for constitutional affairs, as I said to the Chair: let us proceed with the business of today. When the Prime Minister is here at three o'clock the matter can be resolved forthwith.

It is not the way to stand in the House very subtly and suggest that 20 members of a caucus are all liars. That is the inference that one could make. That is the interpretation one could take from the hon. member.

I made an offer to proceed forthwith sincerely with the business of the House. At three o'clock the right hon. Prime Minister will then take the floor and make a statement and then the matter will be resolved.

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, first of all I apologize for any disruptive tactic. I had difficulty restraining myself because I was doing what I do so often in this House and that is take my example from a man whom at normal times I respect very greatly, the hon. member for Yellowhead. It so

happens I was following a terrible example of his this morning. I found a certain hypocrisy in that he could shout for 10 minutes.

Mr. Speaker: We are on a specific matter. The right hon. minister has indicated that perhaps he was over enthusiastic. Why can we not just leave it at that? If the hon. member for Burin—St. George's has some advise for the Chair on the point we are discussing, I will hear him.

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, just to reinforce the point that my colleague made a moment ago, it is not a question of conspiracy in which a bunch of us contrived some words that were never said.

We sincerely believe that we heard and saw mouthed certain expressions. Our analysis of what happened is not confined to members on this side of the Chamber. It has been confirmed by other people who were in the gallery at the time.

Mr. Speaker: Just a minute. We are getting into an area I felt we ought not to get into.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Lapierre: Mr. Speaker, speaking of insulting language, and especially on the part of the Prime Minister, it has been six weeks since the Prime Minister used insulting and degrading language in referring to me, and for six weeks, no one has done anything about it.

Mr. Speaker: One moment, please. Yesterday we discussed the position taken by the hon. member for Richelieu.

[*English*]

I am seized with the matter. I will do the best I can on it. This is not the time to get into it.

I think we are going to proceed with Routine Proceedings.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official