

*Privilege*

I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that a careful reading of your ruling of October 10 and a careful reading of what the government is now putting forward will show that it is a legitimate complaint by myself and other members, that this is a misrepresentation of what has taken place in this House, and I believe it is in contempt of your ruling of October 10.

I would submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that it is incumbent upon this place to rule on this type of behaviour. If any other private individual or company did such a thing, there are rules and laws which we pass here, enforced by the CRTC and the misleading advertising section of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Governments do not come under those particular regulations. I think it is incumbent upon members of this place and the Speaker to ensure that representations of what takes place in this place are true and correct, and do not even lead to the impression of falseness.

**Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to support the arguments of my colleague as we have both been very distressed by these ads.

I would like to remind you, Mr. Speaker, of comments made in this House in 1980 with regard to misleading advertising by the hon. member for Wellington—Dufferin—Simcoe. On October 22, 1980, he asked this question in the House.

“May I ask the minister”, whichever minister it was, “how he can justify his double standard of exempting the government from provisions regarding false and misleading advertising where false and misleading advertising by the private sector would result in criminal charges being laid by the government?”

**An hon. member:** Isn't he a minister now?

**Mrs. Marleau:** Yes, he is. Mr. Speaker, I understand that at present there is no body that rules over misleading advertising broadcast by the government. The government could at least be reminded to apply the same standards as apply to the public in the promotion of a service or a product. There is no body to rule on this matter, Mr. Speaker, except yourself.

The integrity of the House of Commons is at stake and the reputation of all of its members. We must protect Canadian citizens. Mr. Speaker, I ask you to rule on this point.

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops):** Mr. Speaker, I want to read from page 196 of *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada* regarding contempt of the House. It states:

Contempt is whatever the House finds as contempt—

I think that is the case we are actually making at the moment.

—any act—which obstructs or impedes—any member—of the House in the discharge of his “parliamentary” duty,—

It goes on to elaborate on that point. To support the point made by the hon. member for Dartmouth, this morning I was listening to one of the country and western stations and heard the ad which said that the proposed goods and services tax is not an additional tax.

• (1140)

The minute I heard that I realized that my constituents, recalling what I have been telling them for the past year, may wonder if I have been telling the truth because I have been saying that on hair cuts, movie tickets and laundry bills they will have to pay a tax, items on which they have never paid a tax before. This is a brand new, first-time tax. The ad says this is not an additional tax, not a new tax. That is a misrepresentation of what this House has actually passed.

I support the point made by my hon. friend from Dartmouth that this tax is not through Parliament. Mr. Speaker, as your ruling indicated, we are in a parliamentary democracy and this legislation is only half-way through the process. I am assuming that the Liberal senators will stop this bill so this will become an irrelevant tax.

However, I want to say I believe there has been a contempt of the House when a finance department advertisement broadcast on radio this morning indicated that this was not a new tax. I, and I am sure my colleagues here from all sides of the House, have been telling their constituents that this is a new tax. We have never seen this tax. I am sure my hon. friend, the parliamentary secretary from Alberta, knows that certainly in that province it will be a new tax. Alberta does not have any kind of sales tax at this point, particularly on service.