

*Summer Recess*

My second area of concern is that we are not making the urgent and necessary efforts needed to avert the same disaster of confrontation and violence in this country that is raging like a conflagration in the rest of the world. I do not think we take enough pride and satisfaction that we have thus far avoided violence, assassinations, bloodshed and political extremism which have poisoned all the other nations of the world, including France, Britain and the United States.

● (2350)

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Eglinton-Lawrence has the floor.

**Mr. de Corneille:** What makes us think that we can so easily escape the ravages of frustration, racism and moral decay that is consuming other western nations whose positions of democracy are older and more established than our own?

**Miss Bégin:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am hesitant to rise because I have never experienced anything like this in the almost nine years I have been in Parliament. Maybe it is because I am a woman and the first to sit in this House from the province of Quebec. Not only am I a French Canadian but I am an immigrant to this country, and I resent all forms of discrimination. I do not particularly like the joke which the Tories are playing on our colleague right now. Whatever status or job in life—

**An hon. Member:** Order.

**Miss Bégin:**—of someone, one is not supposed to play tricks like that, and I consider it an attack on a member's privilege.

**An hon. Member:** Talk to your own caucus; they were having just as much fun.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**An hon. Member:** Everyone was laughing.

**Mr. McDermid:** You are laughing as hard as anyone, Mr. Bockstael.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I am sure all hon. members are conscious of the need to maintain the dignity of the chamber. The hon. member for Eglinton-Lawrence has the floor.

**Mr. de Corneille:** One could hardly find a better illustration of the point I was talking about than what has just transpired on the other side. I hardly think it befits the dignity of the whip of the opposition party to pass around a plate as if for a collection, which is a mocking of the church or a mocking of the Christian faith. I do not find that amusing. I do not think it should be amusing to members in this House. I do not mind something that is a good joke, I think I can take that; but I think it is particularly out of taste when I was talking about the tragic need for dignity and solemnity in this House of Commons.

I was trying to point out how grave is the need for the people who watch us on television to have respect for this House of Commons. When members continue to make a mockery of it, it cannot elicit in the people who watch us a sense of confidence in our political system.

As I was saying, we should realize that our House of Commons is in great peril.

**An hon. Member:** Why?

**Mr. de Corneille:** It is in peril when members mock it, deride it and do not have sufficient respect that they can give their ears to their hon. colleagues.

What are we here for if that is the behaviour we show?

**An hon. Member:** Closure. That is what.

**Mr. de Corneille:** I am sorry if that is how it behooves members of the opposition. They do not mock me. They are mocking themselves and Parliament.

**Mr. McDermid:** Look who is mocking Parliament.

**An hon. Member:** You are closing Parliament so you can go on holidays.

**Mr. de Corneille:** We should be proud of this country and of the peace and tranquility we have. We should not mock it. How dare we mock the system. How dare we drag it into the dust.

Tragically, in this country we have seen altogether too many politicians fanning the flames of separatism and regionalism, stonewalling instead of talking and negotiating.

**Mr. McDermid:** Stonewalling. Look who is talking about that. That is the pot calling the kettle black.

**Mr. de Corneille:** In the 1950s I worked on programs to bring about dialogue between people of different churches. In the 1960s I worked on programs to bring about dialogue between Christians and Jews. In the 1970s I worked to try to bring about dialogue between Canadians of different cultures. In 1969 I went to the Harrison Hot Springs conference to discuss ways to apply the principles of dialogue to our national scene, to seek participatory democracy to reduce confrontation. I ran for Parliament ten years later to pursue those same goals, to look for unity and to find ways to bring people at least into dialogue, if not agreement.

I am trying to challenge all members of this House. I implore members of the opposition to hear what I am saying. We should try to seek dialogue, to seek to talk together and to listen to one another. People ask me why I look so serious. They may ask me when I will stop looking so serious on television. That will be when we stop playing the game of politics and engage in political science; when we stop the game of scoring points and conduct the affairs of state; and when we sit across the table as well as across the aisle.

I am proud of what we have been able to do this session. But I suggest it is long overdue for this Parliament and our system