

Point of Order

shouted back and forth creates a situation that may not be excusable and it may not be right but it creates disorder because somebody responds. It is not an easy task in a situation like this to find a way through it according to procedure and according to the best sense of civility that we can muster in the House. The hon. House leader feels that it is not necessary for the Prime Minister to come into the House.

If the hon. member for Cape Breton—East Richmond feels that the denial the Prime Minister made outside the House is sufficient, I will accept it.

Mr. Dingwall: Mr. Speaker, the matter has been raised through several interventions yesterday.

The hon. government House leader has made a proposition. He has indicated that members of his caucus did not hear the remarks. They deny the remarks as part of a tradition of this House. I will accept the word of the hon. member who says that.

When the Prime Minister returns to the House and says that on the floor of the House of Commons, we will then respect the words of that hon. member. Until such time we think it only appropriate and fair to all concerned since there are hon. members on this side who believe something different.

We will wait for the Prime Minister to return and to make a brief denial, if you will, or statement or apology.

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I want to simply raise one point. Yesterday, after Question Period, the Speaker was asked to review the “blues” with regard to the statement of the Prime Minister.

I heard the Speaker say this morning that he reviewed the “blues” and they were not helpful. I would like to ask the Speaker to examine those words, because I think they are very helpful in that there are no such words on the “blues” or on any records of this House.

I want to be very careful to ask that the Speaker examine those words because I think the right words are that it was helpful.

Mr. Speaker: I am not going to get into an argument of semantics.

What I am saying to all members of the House and to the public is that neither the “blues”, the *Hansard*, the tape, the television nor the soundtrack give any indication whatsoever that the Prime Minister said the words alleged.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (President of the Privy Council and Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we talk about tradition in this House. I am certainly one who respects the traditions and tries—

Mr. Simmons: You would never know it sometimes.

Mr. Speaker: Just a moment, please.

Does any hon. member really believe that by shouting at the minister when he is on his feet is helping us to settle this matter?

Mr. Simmons: I do not believe it but he is allowed.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Burin—St. George’s will take his seat and be quiet.

Mr. Simmons: Play fair. He disrupted the House for five minutes.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Burin—St. George’s will retract that accusation against the Chair.

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, the record will show that the right hon. gentleman from Yellowhead disrupted the House for five minutes with his shouting.

I retract any inference against the Chair, but I appeal to the Chair to continue its known fairness.

Mr. Speaker: That is what I am trying to do.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, I simply want to draw the attention of all of us to what I think would be quite a new practice established here.

Were it possible for an accusation or an attribution of words to be made to another member, however outrageous or however unfair that might be, and then to somehow transfer to the accused the onus of denying words that person never said, would be in my judgment a departure from the traditions of this House and not a helpful departure from the traditions of this House.

If one seeks to remove the rules of this House from the immunity from partisanship which they have by and large known, then that process can destroy order here surely and absolutely.

I as one member of this House—