

*Government Orders*

appropriate to call members of Parliament pigs. They think that just because they disagree with us, they have a right to say whatever they want. That also contributes to the debate.

Those people who seek to reform us on the outside should remember that there are people on all sides of this House who have the good will of a country at heart, who are willing to compete but are also willing co-operate, are willing to put forward a new face and are willing to try to reform their institutions. In return, we need people to support us.

In the motion, the government talks about decorum. I think we have to take this through on a daily basis, begin to work through the committee system and work through our caucuses to add decorum to the House. Old habits are said to die slowly, but the institutions of Canada are also very much at stake. When the functioning of this House begins to resemble the country and begins to function as a reflection of the country's interest, people regain faith that when they send us to Ottawa that we are doing something worth-while. When they see us on the weekend they will be proud of us. When it comes to an election, they will know the bitter fights are done in a context of the good will of the country.

In that spirit, I think the government should be thanked for putting this on the table. The opposition parties should be thanked for putting forward some very worth-while amendments. The House should seek to work together by supporting this motion.

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to address this particular question in the House and I shall refer to it as appropriate decorum, which means, as I define it, use of sensitive language and certainly not inappropriate gestures when one is using body language to communicate a particular point.

I called some people today once I knew I would be able to address the question. I was able to reach nine individuals, constituents of mine, and asked them how they felt about this. The first reaction was: "Thank goodness it is happening. It is about time". There was a

feeling that this is something that should have occurred sometime ago.

I said: "What would you advise me to do in order to attempt to advance this debate and these questions?" They said: "Clean it up. There is no excuse for this kind of silliness, this kind of insensitivity, this kind of abusiveness". They said: "There must absolutely be less bickering. There needs to be more civility. Thank goodness you have made a beginning". They thought of it as a beginning only because we could clean it up here inside, but it must go beyond. It must go to the committee work, it must go in our relationships with each other as we have to deal with each other on some very important questions.

When I asked these individuals whom I contacted, men and women: "What is it that offends you the most?", they referred to the sexist language, the racist comments and the very abusive gestures.

I want to go on record to indicate in the strongest possible terms that I condemn all types of sexist language, all types of racial expressions and all insensitive gestures because what do they do, they simply bring out the worst in people, the worst in men and women as opposed to the best. It permits us to debase ourselves. It does not call upon us to give that which is best of every human being. It needs to be condemned, not only in this House, but wherever it happens.

Why does it happen? Clearly, on some occasions people do lose their tempers and they forget what it is they ought to do, how they ought to react. Also it is an expression of anger and it is their only way to express that anger. Also in some cases, it is very bad manners. In some instances as well, it is not only bad manners, it is certainly a reflection upon the way they were raised, the way they were educated, the way in which they were socialized and the fact that they have not kept up with the times, that they are still back there, while we should be up here looking forward.

*[Translation]*

I would also like to make an important distinction that does not seem to have been made today, and I am referring to the difference between inappropriate language and gestures and what I would call a certain commitment and passion about what we feel or want to say, which is called partisanship. I can be partisan—I am aware of that and I think I am from time to time—but I