

Point of Order

However, Mr. Speaker, I want to deal for a moment with the specific case he raises. I believe this is the statement made by the hon. member for Portage—Interlake at pages 5498 and 5499 of *Hansard*. I want to read just one paragraph into the record. It is what I think the hon. member is referring to. It says:

Advocating violence against women is unbecoming of all Canadians. It is a shameful and a despicable act of cowardice. Intimidation of this nature belongs in the gutter with the filth and the mire.

My point, Mr. Speaker, is that is an assertion which deals with an advocacy of violence against women. I do not think it is an assertion that is aimed at the president of the PSAC although there is the connection made in the statement where the hon. member for Portage—Interlake very much objects to the letter that was sent out by the president of the PSAC. But he does not call the head of the PSAC a coward and he does not accuse him of being despicable. What he says is that if what Mr. Bean has done is advocate violence against women then it is the advocacy of violence against women that is shameful and despicable and demonstrates cowardice.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is a statement directed personally so much at Mr. Bean as it is at the whole issue of violence against women.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the hon. parliamentary secretary. The hon. member for Cape Breton—East Richmond.

Mr. David Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague and friend the House leader of the New Democratic Party has raised a very substantive issue concerning the standards that are to be adhered to on the floor of the House of Commons and thereafter the implementation of that particular standard as it applies to the opposition parties and that of the government.

I am happy to hear that the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader subscribes to the principle that my friend and colleague has enunciated here this morning. Yesterday I spoke to you in private about my colleague and where he has used the word "baloney". Then in the midst of Question Period you took it upon yourself to intervene. That ate up some of our time for Question Period by not doing it at the usual time. I would have thought the right time for drawing the attention of the House to the comments that you believed to be

somewhat offensive would have been three o'clock. But at the same time, Mr. Speaker, I seek guidance of the Chair. One has to raise the question how during statements under Standing Order 31 and indeed in other interventions how government members will be policed on the floor of the House of Commons.

We understand, Mr. Speaker, that we are in an opposition party. We understand that certain rules and Standing Orders do indeed apply to us. But we would hope that in the future they would apply to all members of the House. I seek the guidance of the Chair as to how it intends to police some of these aspects. On first appearances, Mr. Speaker, some members have contemplated out loud that maybe the standard that we are all hopefully trying to live by is not in some circumstances being implemented fairly or accordingly to all members of Parliament.

The parliamentary secretary is shaking his head. If he wishes to participate in debate then he should participate in the debate. He should not use body language to try to intimidate those of us who are trying to seek guidance from the Chair on a very important matter. If the parliamentary secretary does not believe that what we are raising is sufficiently important enough let him say so. We seek the guidance of the Chair concerning the standards that the Chair is trying to utilize on the floor of the House of Commons for all members, not just opposition members.

• (1020)

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. My concern is that I think the House leader of the Liberal Party is very close to an assertion against the Chair. I am sure he did not intend it.

I think it is very clear that all members of the House would support the Chair in coming down on members for inappropriate behaviour no matter which side of the aisle they sit on.

I want to say very clearly, Mr. Speaker, that I am sure that is not what the hon. member intended in his remarks. I am sure what he said is that he wanted to see it applied fairly. All of us would certainly support that.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I want to make a very short comment and refer to the fact that the points raised by my hon. friend are technically correct.