

Statements by Ministers

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Mr. Speaker, before you hand down your ruling on the use of the word "falsehood" in English and the word *fausseté* in French and whether this constituted unparliamentary language or not, I think there are two aspects to be considered.

First of all, when the Chair examines an incident of this kind to find out whether there was a case of unparliamentary language, it is important to know whether the term was directed to several Members as a group, to a party in general or specifically to one individual. It is clear that in this case, the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) directed his comments specifically to the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon) and to the Leader of the Opposition.

With respect, I may remind the Chair that these are important considerations.

Furthermore, to determine the intent of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, I think it is important to consider the fact that the terms were repeated several times in English and in French.

If the Secretary of State for External Affairs merely wished to get the message across that the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor or the Leader of the Opposition had made statements which in his opinion were not true he did so in more polite terms just a few moments ago when he tried to apologize without altogether doing so he would have used the term once or twice, but in this case, he repeated it eight or 10 times, as we see in *Hansard*, and he did so in a very accusing tone of voice.

I have to conclude that he was trying to tarnish the reputation of the Leader of the Opposition and that of the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor and it is actions of this kind that are traditionally considered to be unparliamentary. Those were my comments, and I hope they will be of some use to the Chair.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: I will, of course, carefully consider the representations that have been made. I am especially touched by the helpful advice I received from the Hon. Member for Windsor West (Mr. Gray) who has very correctly pointed out that it is not just the word, it is the context of the word. There have been different rulings on the same word to be found in the history of procedure of the House of Commons. However, there is a complaint before the House and the Chair will consider it.

Although I am going to reserve on this, I think it is necessary that I do not leave the Chamber with any misunderstanding of the intent of the Right Hon. Minister. I take it from the remarks of the Right Hon. Minister, and I would invite him to comment on what I am going to say if necessary, that it was his intent to say that certain things being said by some other Members were not accurate, and that there was not an intent to say that any inaccuracy was intentionally being bandied

about or used in the debate. There is, of course, a very real difference. The Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) might want to make that point absolutely clear before the Chair retires to consider the matter.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, that certainly was my intent. Let me also say to you, Sir, as I do not think I need to say, that if my duties carry me away from the House and do not allow me to be present on the day that you make your ruling, if you find that any language of mine has been unparliamentary, I will withdraw, as I have on occasion in the past. I naturally would not anticipate that judgment, but your interpretation of my intent is correct.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: I want to thank the Right Hon. gentleman.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

DECLARATION OF HOMECOMING OF RICK HANSEN—MAN IN MOTION

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, as members of the House know, an event will take place later today in Vancouver, British Columbia, which marks the end of a world odyssey, an odyssey comparable in achievements to those of other world explorers. Those achievements have graced the pages of history and today a Canadian is being added to that illustrious list. Rick Hansen, welcomed across the world and taken into the hearts and lives of millions, is home at last.

All Members of the House can take pride that our Speaker will be appearing at the Rick Hansen tribute in Vancouver on Saturday representing all of us. This day marks the fulfilment of a dream, a dream that resulted in a remarkable two-year journey around the world. Rick Hansen has demonstrated courage, determination and vision. It is incumbent upon us not only to keep this dream alive but to hasten the day when all disabled Canadians enjoy full and equal participation in Canadian society.

We believe that the public enthusiasm and understanding which has greeted the Man in Motion tour in every region of the country can be harnessed. Together we intend to turn this energy into a positive force.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I am pleased to announce on behalf of the federal Government and particularly my colleague, the Secretary of State (Mr. Crombie), that the Government will lend its full support to a National Access Awareness Week for disabled persons.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!