

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. La Salle: That is what I said, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. What he did was accuse the hon. minister of directly lying to the population. Whether or not that accusation is made in respect of the House or whether or not it is made in respect of any action on the part of the minister, it seems to me the accusation by one member of another member of a direct lie is unparliamentary and must be withdrawn.

Some hon. Members: Three o'clock.

[Translation]

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Speaker, if I understood well, you want me to withdraw. In view of the commitments made by the minister regarding the proposals contained in his budget, and after what he did, I repeat that he is a liar.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Without having an opportunity to examine the record, the question period will not proceed unless and until the hon. member withdraws the remark he has made in respect of an accusation of lying by the minister, if that is in fact what has taken place. If the hon. member did not say what I have accused him of saying, I am prepared to listen to him. However, if he has accused the minister of lying directly, I would expect him to withdraw that. Otherwise, the question period cannot proceed.

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I rise on what I think amounts to a point of order at this point. It may be something else.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): In Your Honour's initial reaction to what was raised in the House by the Minister of Finance—and I am sure you did it deliberately—you mentioned that perhaps there might be a distinction. Quite frankly, I would like a few moments to consider what Your Honour has said in respect of that distinction. It is now five minutes to three o'clock: I wonder if the matter can wait until three o'clock.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have not heard from the hon. member for Joliette that he did not accuse the minister of lying directly. If he has accused the minister of lying, I would expect him to withdraw it. If he has not, I would expect him to make representations to that effect now. However, if that has been his accusation, the question period will not proceed unless and until that accusation is withdrawn.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Mr. Speaker.]

[Translation]

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Speaker, I listened attentively to your comments, and with all due respect, I also listened to the statement made by the Minister of Finance, his objectives, and his reaction to the allegations he made against us. We have always concurred in the unanimous stance taken by the National Assembly in this matter. The Minister of Finance always persisted in saying that we upheld a separatist measure or a measure aimed at undermining federalism, and such a statement is false. That is why I repeat that the Minister of Finance has been deliberately lying in this regard for the past three weeks, and I do not retract what I have said.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have made a decision in respect of the accusation of the hon. member for Joliette. He has not in any way withdrawn or in any way retreated from the accusation he has made against another member of the House of directly lying. The proceedings of the House will not go forward unless and until the hon. member either withdraws or retires.

Some hon. Members: Out!

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to get into the dispute as to what the hon. member said or what he should do. But it seems to me it is hardly fair to the rest of the House to cut off the question period for that reason. It seems to me, as is the case with most points of order or disputes, that this one should be raised at three o'clock.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am prepared to respect that there were a few minutes remaining in the question period. However, there is clear disorder in the House with the allegation and the statements made by the hon. member for Joliette in respect of another member of this House. In the face of that clear disorder, no other proceeding will take place unless and until either the hon. member withdraws that remark or extends an apology to the House for the use of that unparliamentary language, or else withdraws. Failing his withdrawal, I will have to compel his withdrawal from the premises.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, the question has now been clarified by Your Honour with regard to the use of the word "liar".

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): I put it to Your Honour, and *Hansard* will show it—some hon. members present will remember—that during the years prior to Your Honour's accession to the Chair the word "liar" was used many times on both sides of the House. We can pick on the members who did it then; some of them are no longer here.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!