

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, December 12, 1991

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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[*English*]

### POINT OF ORDER

#### COMMENT DURING QUESTION PERIOD

**Mr. David Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday a number of my colleagues raised a very serious point of order with regard to comments made by the Prime Minister.

I know that you have now had an opportunity to be seized with the particular issue, but due to the fact that the Prime Minister is not in the House I am wondering if we could have some indication from the Chair that perhaps your ruling could be made later this day when the Prime Minister is in the House so that we may have the matter resolved and resolved forthwith.

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Mr. Speaker, since then I have had an opportunity to check with the Deputy Prime Minister who sits next to the Prime Minister. I have checked with the minister of youth and amateur sport who sits behind the Prime Minister and with the Whip, and I remember what I heard. We deny categorically and absolutely that the words attributed to the Prime Minister were stated by the Prime Minister.

• (1010)

**Mr. Speaker:** Before we go further let me say that members were heard yesterday. I am seized with the matter, as the hon. member for Cape Breton—East Richmond has pointed out. I do not want further debate on it. I will indicate in response to the hon. member for

Cape Breton—East Richmond that I have looked at *Hansard* and I have checked the tape, watched it, and it does not assist us at all in this matter.

The hon. member for Cape Breton—East Richmond has suggested that the Prime Minister might return to the House at some later moment and I think that probably would be appropriate. Until I hear from the Prime Minister the matter is not completely settled.

I am indicating to the House that certainly at the moment I cannot advance the argument one way or the other as a consequence of having checked with the *Hansard* and checked with the tapes.

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops):** Mr. Speaker, just to seek clarification, you are awaiting the appearance of the Prime Minister before this is pursued any further. Is that correct?

**Mr. Speaker:** There is obviously an attempt being made by the hon. member for Cape Breton—East Richmond to have this matter resolved in a civilized way and according to the rules.

If the hon. government House leader disagrees, I will give him the floor. I will hear him.

**Mr. Andre:** Mr. Speaker, we have a situation in which an accusation is made by members opposite which is absolutely denied by everybody within earshot of the Prime Minister. The record was checked concerning any verification of this accusation by *Hansard* or by the tapes. There is absolutely none.

I dispute the fact that the allegation remains outstanding. An allegation is made without foundation or proof and it is categorically denied. That should be the end of it.

**Mr. Speaker:** I would ask all hon. members for just a moment, including ministers and front-bench members on the other side and anybody else, to just quiet down.

One of the reasons we are in difficulty is that there is too much shouting back and forth. Sometimes what is