

*Point of Order—Mr. Corbett*

for Parkdale-High Park (Mr. Flis) on Tuesday, June 15, 1982, and finds that the petition meets the requirements of the Standing Order as to form.

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## MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

**Madam Speaker:** I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed Bill S-27, an act to amend the act of incorporation of the Grand Lodge of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the Dominion of Canada, to which the concurrence of this House is desired.

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## POINTS OF ORDER

MR. CORBETT—REMARK OF MR. SKELLY

**Mr. Bob Corbett (Fundy-Royal):** Madam Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. During the debate on the borrowing authority bill last evening, I was interrupted by the hon. member for Comox-Powell River (Mr. Skelly) who stated, about some remarks I had made in my speech, that:

—this is the greatest accumulation of mendacities I have heard in a long time.

The concise Oxford dictionary gives the interpretation of mendacious as “lying and untruthful”. I am perfectly aware that this was probably a new word in the hon. member’s vocabulary and he was not aware that the meaning of the word does connote lying and untruthfulness. Therefore, I feel I have a *prima facie* case of privilege. I would ask Madam Speaker to rule on it and perhaps, in view of the fact that that word is unparliamentary, or at least the meaning of it is lying or untruthfulness, request that he be asked to withdraw the term.

**Madam Speaker:** To be correct, that was not a question of privilege but a point of order since it deals with unparliamentary language.

I would also like to say that a point of order was raised at the time it took place and was dealt with by the Speaker at that time. The Speaker in the Chair at that time probably referred to the list of unparliamentary words cited in Beauschesne and did not find the word “mendacity”. That is probably why he did not ask the hon. member for Comox-Powell River to withdraw the expression.

Hon. members might recall that very early in my mandate in the Chair, I had to deal with a member who had used an unparliamentary word which was a synonym of the word mendacity. It was substituted. I asked the hon. member to withdraw that word.

**An hon. Member:** Which hon. member?

**Madam Speaker:** For the purposes of this ruling I do not think it is necessary to identify the hon. member. That member substituted the word mendacious for the word he had used.

English not being my first language, I did not quite know what mendacious meant. It was not in Beauschesne. I thought it was quite sophisticated and proper and I accepted the word.

I will let the matter go this time. I think the hon. member for Fundy-Royal (Mr. Corbett) will bear with me since the matter was dealt with by one of the Deputy Speakers, probably based on what had happened previously in the House, and he let the matter go. I warn hon. members that in my view, any word that is a synonym of a word that is unparliamentary cannot be substituted for the unparliamentary expression. From now on the word mendacity will be considered by me to be unparliamentary as well as mendacator and all other words which mean the same thing. An hon. member cannot accuse another hon. member of not telling the truth by substituting words which mean the same thing.

**Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon):** Madam Speaker, it would appear that a new precedent has now been set by the Chair. The words mendacity, mendacious and mendaciousness do not appear in Beauschesne, or indeed in any precedent I know, as being unparliamentary. Indeed, since I have been here, which has been more than a few years, that expression has been used on all sides of the House with frequency. It has never been ruled by the Chair to be unparliamentary.

May I suggest that before coming to this precedent-setting decision the Chair might wish to hear some in-depth submissions on the matter. What would happen if the Chair makes a decision now to add this word to the list of unparliamentary expressions—in my submission it would constitute a new precedent? Members should certainly have the opportunity of (a) examining precedents in an effort to convince the Chair of the propriety of the expression, and (b) of making submissions to the Chair before it comes to a decision setting such a far-reaching precedent.

I suggest that if the Chair wishes to go that route, it advise the House that it intends to seek submissions on the matter, and that time be set aside for doing that.

**Madam Speaker:** In reply to the hon. member, let me say that I have not been here as long as he has. How did words get on the list of Beauschesne? I suppose at some point the Speaker determined that certain words were unparliamentary, and the list was carried on from one Speaker to another. I do not really know how they got on the list.

In any event, I accept the hon. member’s suggestion. I will look at the procedure by which these words got on the list of unparliamentary language. I will do what has been done in the past.

● (1510)

**Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi):** On a point of order, Madam Speaker. If the hon. House leader of the official opposition had given the hon. member for Fundy Royal the