

*Privilege*

reprimand. That is what will follow, if in fact the House supports the motion. Is that clear?

**Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park):** Mr. Speaker, in light of the sincere apology that the House heard from the hon. member and the sincere apology from the House leader and probably my original motion not giving clear direction to the Chair, I would like to move:

That the hon. member for Port Moody—Coquitlam be called to the bar of the House and be admonished by the Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** There is no doubt in my mind that this is a *prima facie* case of contempt. The motion is acceptable and I propose it to the House.

It is moved by the hon. member for Parkdale—High Park and seconded by the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke:

That the hon. member for Port Moody—Coquitlam be called to the bar of the House and be admonished by the Speaker.

**Mr. Hawkes:** Mr. Speaker, the form of the motion comes as a bit of a surprise to us on this side of the House. I am having just a little bit of trouble with it.

I heard earlier this day the precedents in the British House of Commons for an incident not dissimilar which involved a suspension from the chamber for I believe it was a period of a week. I believe the mace was damaged. It is my understanding at least from other people that the mace was damaged and the member was responsible for the repair of the mace.

I read earlier this day a letter from a constituent from Melville, Saskatchewan, not someone I know, expressing their thoughts and feelings in three pages of what they witnessed in the House last evening. In my remarks last Friday I spoke of this Chamber as the highest court in the land.

Certainly the member is a member of the bar and in his home province he is an officer of the court. Early this morning I asked a colleague of mine who is a lawyer what would happen if a similar incident occurred in a court. I was informed that jail would be the immediate automatic outcome with the duration of that incarceration to be determined at a later point because the contempt would be held to be so grievous.

Canadians are indeed very concerned about the decorum in this Chamber, very concerned about this demo-

cratic institution. I do not want to pretend on behalf of the government that I am speaking for the government or for all members on my side, and I do not intend to move an amendment. I would urge some members of the House to rise and to consider whether or not the protection of the institution is sufficient if the punishment is an admonishment.

With all the formality perhaps it is. Perhaps the public embarrassment is sufficient. But I think there is a kind of fairness principle which exists in Canadians from coast to coast. Sometimes they think that we are a body, we are a group, that gives ourselves privileges that the rest of the world does not have. They ask themselves if they had assaulted an officer of the court what would happen to them. What happened in this Chamber last evening was an assault on the Sergeant-at-Arms of this the highest court in the land.

I just have a feeling that out there in the constituencies across the country there will be some sense of disappointment with an admonishment for an act which is so clearly captured on television and does indeed involve a physical assault on the person of the Sergeant-at-Arms of the House.

I do not for a minute think it is appropriate for me as an officer of this Chamber to move an amendment to a motion which I am sure the member has well considered, but when I spoke earlier the motion without the amendment was one I thought was appropriate to the circumstance for the message that it would send.

My heart goes out to the member who in a moment did something that I am sure he sincerely regrets and certainly his comments were of that nature.

The institution is a very important one and at a very important time in our history some kind of process that would be more readily understood in the country, somewhat beyond a simple admonishment, my heart tells me would be more appropriate to the circumstances.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Jean Lapierre (Shefford):** Mr. Speaker, I think this House and Canadians in general take no pleasure in the fact that it has come to this—that we must now reprimand one of our colleagues. I think we all wish the incident had not occurred.