

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, September 18, 1991

The House met at 2 p.m.

---

*Prayers*

---

[*English*]

### PRIVILEGE

#### ALLEGED UNPARLIAMENTARY EXPRESSION

**Mr. Speaker:** I wish to draw to the attention of the House the hon. member for Burlington is rising on a question of personal privilege which arose out of a matter that was brought to my attention yesterday. I want to say to the House that I view the matter that was raised as grave and serious. I will hear the hon. member.

**Mr. Bill Kempling (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board and Minister of State (Finance)):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Following the controversy over my remarks in the House in addressing the hon. member for Hamilton East, I have had an opportunity to review the television tape and wish to address the House on a point of personal privilege. I lost my temper and said something I should not have said. What is most unfortunate is that my choice of words has offended the hon. member and also has offended the temper of the House. I unequivocally apologize to the hon. member for Hamilton East and to all other hon. members who may have felt maligned by my remarks. I completely withdraw all of those comments made by me yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, I regret this incident and I want to assure all my colleagues of my respect for this institution.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member for Cape Breton—East Richmond wishes to rise on the same matter.

**Mr. David Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Hamilton East is currently on her way to northern Ontario. However, she

has advised me that she is prepared to accept an apology on this matter. But I would like to point out that while the hon. member for Hamilton East is prepared to accept this particular apology on this specific incident, the issue I believe before the House is far greater than that specific remark. The issue is the way in which women members of Parliament, indeed all women employees of the House of Commons, are treated by men.

**Mr. Speaker:** It may very well be that the hon. member and the hon. member who is unable to be here, the hon. member for Hamilton East, may wish to take up the issue of the treatment of any particular person in the House or group of people, but I am very much of the view that this probably is not the proper time to do it. I would ask the hon. member for Cape Breton—East Richmond to conclude his remarks. I certainly feel that it is appropriate that he is able to speak within the limitations of this particular specific issue on behalf of the hon. member for Hamilton East.

**Mr. Dingwall:** Mr. Speaker, very briefly then, I will conclude. As I indicated to you yesterday, I would hope that you would review the tape. I would ask that you as the Speaker of this House review what has happened and to issue a statement to the House on a matter which is very serious, not only to the hon. member but, we believe, to all women.

**Mr. Speaker:** I want to remind the House and all who are listening that there is a long and ancient tradition in this place that when someone has erred and they come before the House and they unequivocally withdraw, and do more than that and extend an apology to the person whom they have perhaps maligned, or at least offended, and to the whole House, that has to be the end of that specific issue.

I indicated in my remarks a few minutes ago that I view what happened yesterday, and these are the words I said: “as grave and serious” and I think I would have the support of almost all hon. members in using those words.