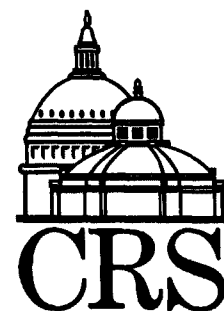


CRS Report for Congress

Words Taken Down: Unparliamentary Language in the House

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WORDS TAKEN DOWN: UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE IN THE HOUSE

SUMMARY

The House of Representatives uses a procedure referred to as "words taken down" to call to order Members who use unparliamentary language during debate on the House floor. Unparliamentary language has been defined to include unseemly language, language which maligns another Member or impugns his motives, and language which disparages a Senator or the Senate as a body. This report describes the procedure used when words are taken down and discusses the historical development of the procedure. It also provides a description of instances when the procedure was either attempted or invoked during the last decade. The actual words which gave offense to Members in each instance are included, as is their disposition, and any explanation provided by the Chair.

Instances in which words were either taken down or objected to just short of being taken down, occurred approximately 31 times during the years 1979-1989, an average of 3 times a year. Democrats demanded that a colleague's words be taken down 58% of the time, while Republicans made the demand 42% of the time. Protagonists were of opposite parties in all of the instances identified, except for one instance in 1979, when both protagonists were Republicans.

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INTRODUCTION

If a Member is called to order for words spoken in debate, the Member calling him to order shall indicate the words excepted to, and they shall be taken down in writing at the Clerk's desk and read aloud to the House; but he shall not be held to answer nor be subject to the censure of the House therefor, if further debate or other business has intervened. **House Rule XIV, clause 5.**

The House of Representatives has an established procedure, referred to as "words taken down," which can be used to call to order Members who use unparliamentary language during the course of debate on the House floor. Unparliamentary language has been interpreted to include unseemly language, language which maligns another Member or impugns his motives, and language which disparages a Senator or the Senate as a body. The procedure for words taken down is set forth in House Rule XIV, clause 5. Members may also be called to order for inappropriate speech under clause 4 of House Rule XIV, which governs disorderly conduct in general. ¹

Because what exactly constitutes unparliamentary language is usually subject to interpretation, this report includes excerpts from each of the instances identified during the years 1979-1989 in which words were taken down or an attempt was made to take them down. The actual words which gave offense to Members, and the disposition and reasoning given by the Chair in each instance, will best serve to more clearly define the threshold between offending words which violate the rules of the House and those which do not.

Instances which involved the words taken down procedure occurred approximately 31 times during the years 1979-1989, an average of 3 times a year. Democrats demanded that a colleague's words be taken down 58% of the time, while Republicans made the demand 42% of the time. Protagonists were of opposite parties in all the instances identified, except for one instance in 1979 when both protagonists were Republicans.

¹ Information on clause 4 of Rule XIV can be found in section 760 of the *House Rules and Manual*. The evolution of clause 4 of Rule XIV is discussed in *Hind's Precedents*, vol. 5, section 5175.

Twice in the history of the House, the Speaker has had his words taken down, most recently by the Minority Whip on May 15, 1984. The Speaker was also called to order for using "improper language" during debate in the Committee of the Whole on February 12, 1797.²

CURRENT PRACTICE³

When a Member wishes to call another Member to order for the use of unparliamentary language, he or she demands that the words just uttered be taken down. Rule XIV, clause 5 requires the words be taken down "in writing at the Clerk's desk and read aloud to the House." In actual practice, all words spoken on the floor are constantly being taken down in writing by the official reporters in order to prepare the daily editions of the *Congressional Record*. Therefore, when a Member demands the words of a colleague be taken down pursuant to Rule XIV, clause 5, the offending words are transcribed from the official reporters' notes in progress and read aloud to the House by the Clerk. The demand that words be taken down must be made immediately after the words are spoken. A demand made after other debate or business has intervened would be untimely and not in order.

The business of the House is suspended until the words have been taken down and reported by the Clerk. If the words objected to are spoken in the Committee of the Whole, the business of the Committee is suspended, and the Committee must rise, so that the words may be reported to the House.⁴

After the offending words have been read, the Chair rules on whether or not they are unparliamentary. The decision of the Chair may not be appealed. However, if a Member claims that the words taken down were not accurately reported, the question of accuracy is put to the House for a vote. Pending the determination of the Chair or the House, debate is not in order. On occasion, the House has, usually by unanimous consent, but sometimes by motion, permitted the Member called to order to explain his words, to withdraw them, or to modify them. If the words are withdrawn, or modified in a manner making them appropriate speech, the Chair makes no ruling.

² *Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1987 Supplement*, chapter 29, section 16.8.

³ The information in this section generally is taken from the *House Rules and Manual*, sections 760 and 761; and from *Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives*, 97th Congress, Chapter 29, sec. 17-19.

⁴ For an explanation of Committee of the Whole, see CRS Report 85-943, "Committee of the Whole: An Introduction," by Ilona B. Nickels, Sept. 12, 1985, 5 p.

The Chair may also, on his own initiative, ask Members if they wish to request unanimous consent to modify their remarks, or to withdraw them, and therefore avoid a ruling on their propriety.⁵

If the Chair rules that the words objected to are out of order, the words are usually stricken from the permanent edition of the *Congressional Record* by unanimous consent. A motion to strike or expunge the words from the *Congressional Record* may be offered if unanimous consent is denied. Once the Chair has ruled words out of order, the Member who spoke them must take his seat and may not speak again during the remainder of the day without the permission of the House, not even on time yielded to him by another Member.⁶ He may, however, continue to vote and to demand the yeas and nays. By custom, permission to speak again is usually granted by unanimous consent immediately after the Chair's ruling. If there is an objection to such a unanimous consent request, a privileged, non-debatable motion that the Member be allowed to speak in order could be offered. Of course, the permission to speak again is predicated on the assumption that any further speech will be appropriate within the rules.

After the Chair rules, the House resumes its suspended business. If the words taken down were spoken in Committee of the Whole, the House automatically resolves itself back into the Committee and resumes the suspended business of the Committee.

In the House, the general practice is for the Chair to wait for Members to enforce the rules of procedure from the floor, through either a point of order or a call for the regular order. The Chair will usually not call to the attention of the House that a violation of its rules is taking place, absent a wish from its membership to adhere to them. Therefore, there are instances in which clearly unparliamentary language has been used on the House floor, but the Member who spoke them was not called to order. For example, on October 17, 1989, a Member used the phrase "her goddamn alcoholic father", but there was no call to order. On other occasions, Members have called upon the Chair to take the initiative in ruling Members out of order for the use of alleged profanity or blasphemy in debate.⁷

However, House rules require the Chair to call Members to order on his own initiative in certain circumstances. If he deems that order must be

⁵ *Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1987 Supplement*, chapter 29, section 19.1-19.2.

⁶ *Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1987 Supplement*, chapter 29, section 17.2.

⁷ *Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1987 Supplement*, chapter 29, section 18.1.

maintained immediately, the Chair could exercise his authority under clause 2 of House Rule 1 "to preserve order and decorum," or his authority under clause 4 of House Rule XIV, which states " . . . if any Member, in speaking or otherwise, transgress the rules of the House, the Speaker *shall*, or any Member may, call him to order." ⁸ The Chair is also expected to intervene to prevent derogatory references to a particular Member, even if that Member is not named, but still identifiable. ⁹ The Chair may also caution Members not to question the personality, integrity or motivation of other Members in debate, even absent a specific point of order. ¹⁰

Finally, the Chair is given the duty to intervene in the case of improper references to the Senate. ¹¹ While Members may refer to the Senate and its legislative actions by name in a neutral way, critical characterizations of the Senate, its Members, or its actions are not in order. ¹²

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The concept of taking down in writing the objectionable words of a Member and reporting them to the House for possible disciplinary action dates back to 1789. The general parliamentary law of that time, based on the practices of the English Parliament, provided for such a procedure. ¹³ However, the House did not consider adopting a specific rule providing that disorderly words be taken down in writing at the time they were spoken until 1808. The proposed rule was not adopted. Later in that year, the Speaker asked a Member, who had objected to the words of another, to write down the words to which he had objected. This practice gradually became the custom.

⁸ *Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1987 Supplement*, chapter 29, section 18.1.

⁹ *Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1987 Supplement*, chapter 29, section 16.4.

¹⁰ *Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1987 Supplement*, Chapter 29, section 17.6, and *House Rules and Manual*, section 760.

¹¹ *Jefferson's Manual*, sec. 374, in *House Rules and Manual*.

¹² *Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1987 Supplement*, chapter 29, section 14.

¹³ *Jefferson's Manual*, section 368, in *House Rules and Manual*, 101st Congress.

In 1832, the House was considering a resolution to censure a Member who had made a speech maligning the Speaker. John Quincy Adams, of Massachusetts, refused to vote on the resolution because the words objected to had been spoken on the previous day but had not been taken down in writing. Adams based his refusal on not having the exact words before him, only references to them. On July 13, 1832, Adams unsuccessfully proposed that the House adopt a rule requiring that words be taken down in writing prior to any disciplinary action. But five years later, on September 14, 1837, the House did adopt such a rule. The House amended the rule in 1880 and Rule XIV, clause 5, which governs words taken down, has remained in its present form since then. ¹⁴

¹⁴ The information in this section is taken from *Hind's Precedents of the House of Representatives*, vol. 5, sec. 5177.

INSTANCES OF DEMANDS THAT WORDS TAKEN DOWN, 1979-1989 ¹⁶

November 20, 1989 (Congressional Record, p. H9050)

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I am about to ask that the gentleman's words be taken down. Mr. Speaker would the gentleman yield for a possible correction? I do not want to make a motion to embarrass the gentleman. Would the gentleman yield I think I heard the gentleman say that those who support Marxist revolutions around the world have not taken specific action on this floor. I hope that the gentleman is not suggesting that anyone on this floor is in support of Marxist revolutions. We are going to have an acrimonious enough debate today without leaving mistaken impressions like that. . . .

SECOND MEMBER. . . . I would be pleased and more than willing to have my words repeated. . . . It is not a direct aspersion on anyone, and I would hope the gentleman would not personally apply it. . . .

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. . . . the Chair would like to say to Members on both sides of the aisle that the Chair may intervene to prevent the arraignment of the motives of other Members. The Chair would, therefore, echo the sentiments expressed by the honorable minority leader, the gentleman from Illinois this morning when he asked the Members to debate the issue and the policy and not to become involved in attacking or laying for question the motives of other Members.

October 18, 1989 (Congressional Record, p. H7162)

MEMBER. . . . So we disguise this whole motion and we go to the well and tell the American people we are going to be honest with you and we want a motion to instruct on catastrophic health care and section 89.

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I demand that the gentleman's words be taken down.

¹⁶ Sources: Instances of words taken down occurring post-1985 were retrieved from the House LEGIS data base (RC99, RC00, and RC01 files). No uniform indexing system exists to identify all instances of words taken down prior to 1985. The selected pre-1985 instances included in this report were compiled from references in the *House Rules and Manual*, *Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives*, 97th Congress, CRS files, and conversations with staff in the House Parliamentarian's Office.

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from . . . is referring to comments that say this is only a motion to instruct conferees solely on catastrophic health care.

THIRD MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I demand the gentleman's words be taken down.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. Does the gentleman ask unanimous consent to withdraw his words

THIRD MEMBER. Regular order, Mr. Speaker. I believe the Chair must rule prior to requesting anything of the gentleman.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. Unless the gentleman asks unanimous consent to withdraw or modify his words.

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw my words and say it was a mischaracterization of exactly what this motion is.

April 26, 1989 (*Congressional Record*, p. H1396)

MEMBER. . . . This is a vulgar abuse of the system. Through chicanery, they are trying to bypass the budgeting process by frontloading next year's budget in order to avoid spending limits. When will this gimmickry and deceit end

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I was going to ask that the gentleman's words be taken down, but on the assumption he does not understand the rules, I will not.

September 29, 1988 (*Congressional Record*, p. H8936-8937)

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I ask that the words of the gentleman who just appeared in the well be taken down. . . .

THE SPEAKER. The Clerk will report the words

THE CLERK. . . . There is a word for it, my colleagues, it is called hypocrisy.

THE SPEAKER. The Chair has considered closely the question of the use of words to distinguish policies as opposed to individuals. There are precedents touching on proper and improper references in debate and dealing with the preservation of comity between the House and Senate. . . . It could be argued that there is a distinction between calling an individual a hypocrite, for example, and referring to some policy as hypocrisy, but the

Chair has discovered a precedent that seems to be directly on point. In 1945, a Member of the House from Georgia referred to another Member and said, "I was reminded that pretexts are never wanting when hypocrisy wishes to add malice to falsehood or cowardice to stab a foe who cannot defend himself." Speaker Rayburn ruled that this was out of order as an unparliamentary reference to another Member of the body. By extension, the same identical words should be held out of order in reference to a Member of the other body whether or not he were a candidate for high office, and under these circumstances and citing this precedent, the Chair would suggest that the gentleman . . . withdraw the offending remarks, including the particular word "hypocrisy," and either amend his reference in the permanent Record or delete it.

May 4, 1988 (*Congressional Record*, p. H2927)

MEMBER. . . . Let me just mention the fact that one time, Mr. Chairman, I was in New York City debating this particular issue. And one of the adversaries, one of the people that from my perspective and view of the world like the fact that America is vulnerable -- and I do not -- I asked the gentleman what is protecting us now and he said

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I move that the gentleman's words be taken down. The gentleman has cast aspersions upon the motives of people in this body who are on this side of the issue. . . .

THE CHAIRMAN PRO TEMPORE. The Clerk will report the words taken down. . . .

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I have discussed the matter with my distinguished colleague and there is no controversy at this point. I withdraw my point of order.

April 19, 1988 (*Congressional Record*, p. H1697)

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I ask that the words of the gentleman from . . . be taken down.

THE SPEAKER. The clerk will report the words of the gentleman from . . . objected to.

THE CLERK. You now have the opportunity of voting against dial-a-porn so nobody in your district will be able to say that you failed to vote against the continued availability of dial-a-porn, a classic example of duplicity, at the best it can be creating in the minds of those who brought this procedure to the floor today.

THE SPEAKER. The Chair is of the opinion that the use in the pejorative of the term "duplicity" by the gentleman from . . . was not directed specifically at any Member, but referred rather to a circumstance, and under those conditions the Chair would feel that the rules of the House have not been offended. If the term had been directed expressly to a Member of the House as descriptive of a Member, then it would have been another matter.
 . . .

March 16, 1988 (*Congressional Record*, p. H880)

MEMBER. We are not talking about a Member throwing things at the Speaker -- as tempting as it may be. . . .

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of personal privilege. I believe that the words of the gentlewoman from . . . are inciteful and spiteful and I demand that they be taken down.

MEMBER. All right, what were they?

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The chair will request that the gentleman from . . . reconsider his request.

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw my point of personal privilege.

September 30, 1987 (*Congressional Record*, p. 7933)

MEMBER. . . . I resent very much, quite frankly, that he would refer to this as a cowardly rule. I want to say to the gentleman . . . that he is the one who is listening to all of these special interest groups who are banging down his door, and they are banging down our doors as well so that they can get their hands on that trust fund.

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I move to take the gentleman's words down. . . .

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Clerk will report the words complained of.

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my remarks.

June 23, 1987 (*Congressional Record*, p. H5426)

MEMBER. I did not ask for a speech. I asked for an answer. The difficulty we have here, aside from the outburst of the gentleman from . . . which has come to be expected . . .

SECOND MEMBER. Which side is the gentleman talking about?

MEMBER. Well, I have not yielded to the gentleman, so I take it that the gentleman is perfectly at ease with the idea that Americans could continue to run any type of military equipment, ammunition, bombs, whatever it might be, down to the Contras

THIRD MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, the previous speaker, as I understand it, made reference to me. I would like to have his words taken down regarding my performance here on the floor.

THE CHAIRMAN. It is too late for that, the Chair will advise. Further debate has intervened.

June 18, 1987 (*Congressional Record*, p. H5296)

MEMBER. . . . the idea of the U.S. government establishing lists of American citizens based on their ideological convictions is offensive to us. It ought to be offensive to people in your party, a party which has a long and distinguished record of defending the individual rights of the American people. This is a shameful day in the 200th anniversary of our Constitution when we would consider establishing this list.

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I demand that the gentleman's words be taken down

THE CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will report the words objected to.

MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the final part of my statement be stricken from the Record.

June 18, 1987 (*Congressional Record*, p. H5297)

MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I have a point of order. I ask that the gentleman's words be taken down, the words saying that now we know that those people have not done it in good faith, their objections are not in good faith. The question is motivation, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will report the words.

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, may I know what the words are? I really do not recall what I said. Mr. Chairman, may I ask unanimous consent to withdraw any words that referred to any individual Members? I do not think I intended to do that -- if they referred to any individual Member or the intent of any individual Member.

June 15, 1987 (*Congressional Record*, p. H4594)

MEMBER. . . . I realized what is [the Member's] terrorist is my freedom fighter, and what is my freedom fighter is his terrorist. I implore the Members to vote down this mischievous amendment. . . .

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I demand that the gentleman's words be taken down about our colleague, . . . supporting terrorists.

THE CHAIRMAN PRO TEMPORE. Does the gentleman . . . withdraw his request?

SECOND MEMBER. No, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN PRO TEMPORE. Is the gentleman . . . willing to request that his remarks be modified in any way?

MEMBER. . . . No; it is a matter of personal perception. . . . I may be wrong. He may be wrong. That is up to the judgment of the Members, but my perception about his misperceptions stands.

SECOND MEMBER. I have seen people crawfish. That is good enough for me. Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my request.

June 18, 1986 (*Congressional Record*, p. H3867)

MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I would like to move that the gentleman's words be taken down on the grounds that the gentleman is challenging the motives of Members of Congress, and as this gentleman understands, it is inappropriate to challenge the motives of Members of Congress. One can challenge the political position asserted by Members of Congress. One can challenge the political position asserted by Members of Congress, but I do not believe that it is within the purview or the prerogatives of any Member to challenge the motives. The gentleman has mischaracterized the motive of Members of Congress. . . .

THE CHAIRMAN. The Chair would make an inquiry of the gentleman. Does he insist upon this demand?

MEMBER. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I think one gentleman earlier said that this debate ought to move on a higher level. This gentleman wants to insist upon it.

THE CHAIRMAN. The Chair, under the rules, will ask that the Clerk take down the words in question.

MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, in order to allow the debate to proceed, I will withdraw my point of order. The gentleman from . . . has made his point. I wish that the debate go forward on the merits of the issue, rather than on impugning the motives or integrity of any Member of Congress on either side of the aisle. I think I have made that point. It is not necessary to rule, and I withdraw it.

THE CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from . . . withdraws his demand.

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I object, if that is appropriate, because I would like to have a ruling.

MEMBER. There was no unanimous consent request made.

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I have been challenged and I would like to have a ruling by the Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN. The gentleman will suspend. The Chair would observe that under the rules, unanimous consent is not required for the gentleman to withdraw his request. The gentleman's request is withdrawn. . . . The Chair would observe to all parties to the debate that the highest degree of decorum is required under the House rules and all Members are requested to observe that.

August 12, 1986 (*Congressional Record*, p. H6076)

MEMBER. I demand that the gentleman's words be taken down.

THE CHAIRMAN PRO TEMPORE. The Clerk will report the words objected to.

THE CLERK. The President, unfortunately, needed to find some way of doing it because hypocrisy has characterized his entire dealing with this issue. He has contended all along that it is nonnuclear.

THE CHAIRMAN PRO TEMPORE. It is the opinion of the chair that the proper remedy in this situation is not to take down the words, but the gentleman from . . . should refrain from characterizing the President in a way that demeans the President or the office. The gentleman may proceed in regular order.

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I have a parliamentary inquiry . . . is the Chair's ruling that language that would otherwise be unparliamentary cannot be used with regard to the President of the United States?

THE CHAIRMAN PRO TEMPORE. The Chair will respond to the gentleman that the taking down of words is normally designed for words that disparage one Member with respect to another, and that was not the situation posed here. However, in an appropriate circumstance it would be a proper remedy. However, Members should conduct themselves in such a way as not to personally disparage the President of the United States.

August 8, 1986 (*Congressional Record*, p. H5745)

MEMBER. This is an effort by the chairman, for whom it is not enough that he is chairman, to become chief arms negotiator, too. Ambition knows no bounds. But this is the chairman's effort to rehabilitate himself with the Sister Boom-Boom wing of the Democratic party

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I would make the point of order that the Member is coming pretty close to having his words taken down. The motives of the Members are not to be called in order under the rules, and I would suggest that the point of order under the rules would be that the gentleman refrain from personal observations as to Members' motivation and spend his time on the substance of the issue before the House.

March 19, 1986 (*Congressional Record*, p. H1335)

MEMBER. See how they constricted and strangled the essence of liberty and independence in systematic fashion so that their people are deprived of liberty, the liberty which we enjoy and which enables people like my predecessor, the speaker before me, to get up here and rant and rave about how wrong we in the United States are.

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, a point of order. I move that the gentleman's words be taken down on the grounds that the gentleman has no right to characterize this gentleman's statement. I will be characterized by

history, not by the gentleman in the well, and I want the gentleman's words taken down.

MEMBER. I will change only one word. I will withdraw the words "rant and rave" and say "discuss" how wrong we in the United States are.

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for realizing that he made a serious error. I thank him very much.

March 18, 1986 (*Congressional Record*, p. H1213)

MEMBER. For Members of Congress to stand safely on this floor and take potshots at men and women of tremendous courage who are struggling against great odds to oppose Communist tyranny in Nicaragua is, indeed, astonishing. That questions no one's patriotism; it questions their judgment.

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I request the gentleman's words be taken down. He is questioning the judgment of other Members of the House.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. . . . The Chair would inquire as to which words the gentleman refers to.

SECOND MEMBER. He questions the judgment of the Members of the House who oppose the Reagan proposition.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Chair would suggest that the gentleman did not refer to any specific Member in violation of the rules of the House. Does the gentleman insist on his request?

SECOND MEMBER. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I do because it followed a statement that I just made where I indicated that I oppose the President's position, and certainly by inference he is questioning my judgment and I resent it.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The gentleman insists, and the Clerk will report the words.

SECOND MEMBER. If the Speaker so desires, I will not press the point of order, but with the indulgence of the Speaker, I will state that I personally resent any attempt to impugn my motives.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The gentleman withdraws his demand.

March 12, 1986 (*Congressional Record*, p. H1082)

MEMBER. . . . So why, if that is the gentleman's point, why go through this cynical charade tomorrow, because it strikes me that is a completely useless exercise to go through and that is the reason why we are going to get a lot of votes "p" for protest tomorrow again because it is a totally unreal exercise, set up for purely political ends, I would say to the gentleman.

SECOND MEMBER. I think the gentleman is out of order. I think it is against the rules of the House to impugn the motives of the leadership of either side.

MEMBER. Does the gentleman wish to have any words taken down?

SECOND MEMBER. No. I am just giving the gentleman my opinion.

MEMBER. If the gentleman feels I am out of order, I would say to the gentleman that I know the rules a little bit and I do not think there is anything in the rules that suggest that I cannot call an action by people in here a political ploy.

SECOND MEMBER. A cynical political ploy.

MEMBER. A cynical political ploy, and I think that is totally within the rules of the House to suggest that something that is going on in this House is in fact just that.

SECOND MEMBER. I think that demeans the dignity of the House. This is a serious vote tomorrow and if the gentleman intends to trivialize it, that is his privilege.

July 11, 1985 (*Congressional Record*, p. H5452)

MEMBER. . . . I will state emphatically, however, I was on the floor when we made the second attempt on a separate vote on the gentleman's amendment, and I will tell him that I believe absolutely there were more than 44 people standing. I know one Member did a quick count on our side and counted 50, at least 50; our staff counted 60 back there. I understand what the gentleman is saying. But I will not take lightly what occurred to us on our side. When our side feels that we cannot get a proper vote, it goes to the very fundamental questions of this House, because frankly, there is a certain amount of comity that is necessary in this House.

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I think that this last statement of the gentleman impugns the motives of the Members of this body. I do not

want to ask for the words to be taken down, but I think that maybe the gentleman would want to withdraw whatever insinuation along those lines that he has made. . . .

MEMBER. I will not.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. Does the gentleman . . . make a point of order?

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I raise a point of order that motives of a Member of this body have been impugned by the suggestion that there was a deliberate miscount of votes by the Chair.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Chair will make a general response to the point of order. Under the precedents of the House, it is not in order in debate to speak disrespectfully of the Chair, to charge dishonesty or disregard of the rules. May 31, 1934, Speaker pro tempore Burns; February 7, 1935, Speaker pro tempore O'Connor; Hind's volume V, 5192, 5188; Cannon's volume VIII, 2531. The Chair believes that any Member assigned to perform the duties of the Chair does so in a nonpartisan and forthright way, and the Chair will not permit to go unchallenged any improper references to the performance or motives of the Chair.

SECOND MEMBER. I thank the Speaker.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Chair is making this as a general admonition. The point of order is withdrawn.

June 19, 1985 (*Congressional Record*, p. H2369)

MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I demand the gentleman's words be taken down.

SECOND MEMBER. Let us get some time here. I want to know what words the gentleman wants taken down. The gentleman voted for nothing in his life in defense.

THE CHAIRMAN PRO TEMPORE. Which words does the gentleman want taken down?

SECOND MEMBER. The only thing the gentleman voted for . . . is the A-10 nonsupersonic aircraft.

THE CHAIRMAN PRO TEMPORE. The gentleman will suspend until the point of order is resolved . . . will the gentleman from . . . advise the Chair as to which words he is objecting to?

MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, the gentleman characterized my debate and used adjectives that I think were personally insulting, wrong, inaccurate, and unbecoming a Member of the House of Representatives.

THE CHAIRMAN PRO TEMPORE. The Clerk will attempt to report the words that the gentleman is complaining about.

SECOND MEMBER. I want them repeated on television.

THE CHAIRMAN PRO TEMPORE. The Chair would advise the gentleman that the committee is proceeding in regular order and the Chair is awaiting the Clerk's reporting of the words. . . . The Chair would counsel all Members to remain calm. . . . The Chair would note that during these proceedings there is no business or debate before the committee other than the reading of the words. . . . For what purpose does the gentleman seek recognition?

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask unanimous consent to withdraw the words "dripping bile and venom from his lips," and replace it with "unnecessary sarcasm," if I could have unanimous consent for that?

THE CHAIRMAN PRO TEMPORE. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman? The Chair hears no objections, and blessed are the peacemakers.

April 23, 1985 (*Congressional Record*, p. H2369)

MEMBER. What the gentleman has just done is destroy this whole bipartisan exercise by a weak media event. This is a responsible debate, and we are all Americans here, not "ostrich" Democrats or conservative Republicans. The gentleman from . . . is debasing the quality of this debate. We all want to do what is best for this country, and we don't need a media weapons display to make our points.

SECOND MEMBER. If I may take back my time . . .

MEMBER. By an act of demagoguery.

SECOND MEMBER. I take back my time.

MEMBER. Which I regret very much.

THIRD MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I demand that the words of the gentleman be taken down.

THE CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will report the words.

SECOND MEMBER. Let me continue, if the gentleman will withdraw.

THIRD MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my request.

March 19, 1985 (*Congressional Record*, p. H1227-1228)

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker I demand that the gentleman's words be taken down.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The gentleman demands that the words be taken down. The Clerk will report the words objected to. Does the gentleman desire to withdraw the words that are offensive to the gentleman from . . . ?

SECOND MEMBER. I do not, Mr. Speaker. . . .

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, would it be in order, in view of the gentleman's statement a minute ago, for me to ask unanimous consent that he be permitted to withdraw his words?

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. Yes, the Chair would entertain such a motion.

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman be permitted to withdraw his words.

SECOND MEMBER. What if I do not want to?

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. Does the gentleman in the well ask unanimous consent? He would be the one who would have to propound the unanimous consent request.

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully submit that I appreciate the request of the gentleman from . . . but I do not think I said anything offensive, and I would ask a ruling on that.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Chair will rule. The Clerk will report the words.

THE CLERK. One of the most important things to remember is that those Members who call for these wasteful votes are led by my distinguished colleague from . . . who speaks constantly of the need to do away with government waste, and he is literally speaking out of both sides of his mouth.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Chair would announce that it is not proper to impugn the motive of another Member. We have precedents here in the House. [Member:] "I cannot believe that the gentleman from Mississippi is sincere in what he has just said." And that was held not in order on November 2, 1942. The Chair must state that the words of the gentleman from . . . have, in his opinion, an unparliamentary connotation, and shall be stricken. Without objection, the gentleman from . . . may now proceed. Do I hear an objection?

MEMBER. Yes, Mr. Speaker. . . .

THIRD MEMBER. I object

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Chair would announce to the distinguished gentleman from . . . that, under the rules of the House, at any time a Member's words are taken down, under the rules he is not permitted on that particular legislative business day to speak to the House without permission of the body. An objection was heard to the unanimous consent request.

February 27, 1985 (*Congressional Record*, p. H768)

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I demand the words be taken down.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Clerk will report the words taken down.

THE CLERK. I think the Members should be allowed to express themselves during special orders without this kind of unfair stealing of time.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Chair thinks in the connotation that the words were used, there is no allegation of illegality. The words are not unparliamentary, in the opinion of the chair.

February 27, 1985 (*Congressional Record*, p. H767)

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I demand the gentleman's words be taken down in that he said "stolen".

THE CHAIRMAN. Words will be taken down.

THE CLERK. The scary thing about it, as a person who served in the legislature for 4 years, and as a person who happens to be sitting as the youngest Member of Congress, I find it difficult that the first situation that we run into in this House, the first class project, as we may call it, is trying

to retain a seat that has been stolen from the Republican side of the aisle, and I think it is rather frustrating.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. Would the gentleman care to modify his remarks before the Chair rules?

SECOND MEMBER. Yes, I would, Mr. Speaker . . . I would like to ask unanimous consent that the words objected to be withdrawn.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. Is there objection . . . [There was no objection.] Simply put, Members should not accuse other Members of committing a crime. When the majority is accused of "stealing," that may suggest illegality. Other words could be used but not those accusing Members of committing a crime.

October 2, 1984 (*Congressional Record*, p. H10672-10673)

MEMBER. He faces a tough reelection fight. He opposes the balanced budget constitutional amendment. He has one of the most liberal spending records in the House of Representatives . . . And so he comes to floor with a gimmick. I think that is truly unfortunate. This bill was not passed out of the Budget Committee.

SECOND MEMBER. . . . Mr. Speaker, I question the speaker regarding impugning the motives of the chairman who has introduced this legislation.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. Does the gentlewoman insist that the gentleman's words be taken down?

SECOND MEMBER. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I do.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Clerk will report the words.

THIRD MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry . . . as an observer of what transpired here, it was my impression that the point of order raised by the gentlewoman was raised too late, and I would ask the Chair to make a ruling that in fact a point of order was made too late.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Chair would state that at the time the point of order was made further debate had not taken place and therefore the point is entertained.

FOURTH MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry . . . it was my impression that the gentlewoman never asked that the words be taken down, that the Chair guided her into that.

SECOND MEMBER. I asked.

FOURTH MEMBER. The gentlewoman never made that point in her language. Is that usual procedure?

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Chair was simply attempting to understand the intent and the motive of the gentlewoman's point of order.

THIRD MEMBER. Mr. Speaker . . . I would like to ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from . . . be permitted to proceed in order. . . .

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman . . . Does the gentleman first ask unanimous consent to modify his words?

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to modify my words.
...

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I would like to know what his words are going to be that he is going to modify.

MEMBER. Precisely the words to which the gentlewoman objected.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The words that were uttered just prior to the gentlewoman's demand.

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

May 15, 1984 (*Congressional Record*, p. H3843)

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I demand that the Speaker's words be taken down.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. Words will be taken down. The Clerk will report the words.

THE CLERK. My personal opinion is that you deliberately stood in that well before an empty House and challenged these people and you challenged their Americanism and it is the lowest thing that I have ever seen in my 32 years in Congress.

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, has the Chair ruled?

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Chair has not ruled.

MEMBER. If the Chair would rule, I have a request that I would like to make.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Chair feels that that type of characterization should not be used in debate.

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent at this point that the Speaker be allowed to continue in order. . . . I am asking for that unanimous consent. Our point has been made. I think that we want to change the tenor of this debate and we should now proceed on a higher plane with this debate.

July 28, 1983 (*Congressional Record*, p. H5867)

MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I demand that the gentleman's words be taken down.

THE CHAIRMAN. Words will be taken down As soon as the words can be transcribed . . . the Speaker will then pass upon the words that are being taken down. The Clerk will report the words.

THE CLERK. I am concerned, as I said, about the statements that I have heard on the floor today, because I believe that what they have a tendency to do, even though that may not be the intention, I think they have the tendency to try to assassinate the character of the person making the statement rather than to effectively assassinate the argument.

THE CHAIRMAN. The Committee will rise

THE SPEAKER. . . . The words having been read, and the gentleman from . . . having very definitely included in his statement a disclaimer that he does not impugn the motives or intentions of any Member of the House, in the opinion of the Chair, in his legislative argument the words of the gentleman from . . . are not unparliamentary and the gentleman may proceed.

May 26, 1983 (*Congressional Record*, p. H3412)

MEMBER. Mr. Chairman I insist that the words be taken down.

THE CHAIRMAN PRO TEMPORE. The Committee will rise

THE SPEAKER. The Clerk will report the words objected to.

THE CLERK. I do not want my colleague from Indiana to be ashamed whatsoever or to let this element over here who advocates unilateral disarmament to browbeat you into thinking they know more than you do.

THE SPEAKER. The Chair is ready to rule. The statement as made by the gentleman from . . . is apparently not directed at any particular Member. The House has had rulings in situations, perhaps analogous to this in the past: A statement by the gentleman from Mississippi . . . that "it has been amazing to me to hear these Members rise on the floor and give aid and comfort to those enemies, those traitors within our gates, for every Communist in America is a traitor to our Government and is dedicated to its overthrow." That was held in order by Speaker Martin on November 24, 1947, since it did not reflect on any individual Members. This is a ruling that has been made by this House before and it seems that there is an established precedent. While the remarks of the gentleman are in order, the Chair would caution him that in the tone of his voice or things of that manner it is against the rules of the House to make any statement that would be personally offensive. The Chair has ruled that both the gentleman's statements were not personal to any particular Member of the House. The Committee will resume its sitting.

July 2, 1980 (*Congressional Record*, p. H6085)

MEMBER. I am sorry that the gentlewoman from . . . was duped the way she was. I am sorry, in my opinion . . .

SECOND MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I demand that the gentleman's words be taken down.

MEMBER. She was duped the way she was.

SECOND MEMBER. I demand the gentleman's words be taken down.

MEMBER. Here we go, with the same dilatory manner.

SECOND MEMBER. You said it, Mr. Speaker.

MEMBER. The man who lives 50 miles from here . . .

SECOND MEMBER. I demand his words be taken down.

MEMBER. And commutes every night. What concern is it to you?

SECOND MEMBER. Regular order. The Speaker no longer has the floor. I demand his words be taken down.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. Does the gentleman from . . . withdraw the word that was used?

MEMBER. The Speaker will withdraw the word.

July 24, 1979 (*Congressional Record*, p. 20380)

MEMBER. Mr. Speaker, I demand the gentleman's words be taken down.

THE SPEAKER. The Clerk will prepare the remarks of the gentleman from . . . and the House will hear them. The Clerk will report the words.

THE CLERK. Mr. Speaker, may I add that to use, as one of my colleagues used, Lincoln's name to promote the amendment seems to me to be the height of hypocrisy.

THE SPEAKER. In the opinion of the Chair, the gentleman from . . . made specific remarks concerning a specific Member of the House and his quote. The Chair would refer to the use of the word "hypocrisy" as decided by previous rulings in this House, and the Chair refers to the ruling of Speaker Rayburn, October 25, 1945. The reference in debate was by Representative Cox of Georgia to another Member: "I was reminded that pretexts are never wanting when hypocrisy wishes to add malice to falsehood or cowardice to stab a foe who cannot defend himself." Those words were ruled unparliamentary when specifically applied to another Member. In the opinion of the Chair, the remarks of the gentleman from . . . are unparliamentary and not in order. Without objection, the gentleman's remarks will be stricken from the record and the gentleman may proceed in order.

June 12, 1979 (*Congressional Record*, p. H4364)

MEMBER. Mr. Chairman, I demand that the words be taken down.

THE CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will report the words objected to. . . . The Committee will rise.

THE SPEAKER. The Clerk will report the words objected to.

THE CLERK. Mr. Chairman, I expected resistance to this amendment and not necessarily my getting involved. I am not a member of this committee. But this amendment is probably the most serious in a detrimental way to the main purposes of equal opportunity of education to the most

needed segments of our society that has been presented thus far and probably could ever be presented. The insidiousness of the amendment is compounded by the sponsor's deceptive -- I should say hypocritical -- presentation of this amendment, disguising it as a quota prohibition.

THE SPEAKER. The Chair is ready to rule. The Chair, having read the references concerning deception and hypocrisy, will state that there have been previous opinions by the Chair that there is nothing wrong with using the word, "deceptive," or the word, "hypocritical," in characterizing an amendment's effect but when a Member so characterizes the motivation of a Member in offering an amendment, that is not in order. Consequently, the words in the last sentence read by the Clerk are unparliamentary and without objection, the offensive words are stricken from the Record.

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