

affecting the rights, dignity and integrity of the Legislature collectively, and, second, the rights, reputation and conduct of the members individually. I want to deal with both of those aspects and the issue revolves around the ruling that was given by the Lieutenant Governor. Now there is a rule in our book and I think when the rules are deliberately disregarded by the Chair, then it is a blow not only against the member against whom the ruling is made but against the Legislature and the process itself. If you turn to page 48 in your rule book, you will see under subdivision (b) every motion to reconsider shall take preference over all other questions except the motion to adjourn. That is what the rule says. When the Chair, whoever happens to be there, begins to manipulate the Chair because of whatever opinion he or she may hold toward the issue being discussed or the individual doing the discussion, that to me derogates against the entire body of the Legislature. But in the instance this morning, I feel not only was the Lieutenant Governor wrong, absolutely, unequivocally wrong, not just mistaken but wrong, I think the Legislature to sit and allow that to happen was wrong also. What I am asking for this point for is this. We should make a determination whether the rules are going to govern the Legislature or whether the Speaker arbitrarily can do anything he chooses. For my part, as long as we have a written set of rules, I must comply with those rules and I would expect the others who voted for these rules to comply also. But if the rules are not going to apply only where I am concerned, I want to know that. I think I am entitled to know it. There is such a thing as fairness. I am one out of 49. I can be voted down on every issue within the rules. It is not necessary to bring into the body where laws are to be made in accordance with justice and fairness the type of racism and discrimination that these laws are to fight. So all I am asking for from the body is this, not any quarter but just let me know how this game is being played. Are the rules to apply to me who am black, and I want that in the record so if anybody reads this point of personal privilege in the debate they will know why it was raised, if the rules apply to me I want them enforced where I am involved. If they don't, I want to know that. And, Mr. Chairman, I had said that I would get back at the body for the ruling that was made and the body's failure to react. That would require certain meanness and pettiness of spirit that at this point I have not yet developed. I wish that I were able to respond in kind to the way people do me on the floor and in other corridors of this Capitol, but as of yet I can't do it. So my point, I think, has been made,