question I wanted to ask is important in view of the fact—my colleagues opposite may laugh, but I know that government members are not interested in this type of question. I believe that the minister is serious and honest enough—this is a question of privilege and I have the right to express my opinion—to tell the House whether she told the students that the government had lost control over its security service in view of the great means that they now have at their disposal to investigate nearly everything. If she made such a statement, we on this side of the House are perfectly entitled to be concerned and to ask, as did my colleague, that this matter be referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is another contribution to the general question of privilege raised by the hon. Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss Bégin) and the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker). For the moment, I am reserving my judgment.

[*English*]

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I thought it might be helpful to Your Honour, relative to Your Honour's interim report that you just gave on the matters relating to the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark), to say that, as your Honour knows, the Acting Prime Minister called upon you and asked you to investigate these matters a week ago Monday, and last Thursday I pointed out the seriousness of what may be going on in these buildings. Therefore, in so far as Your Honour wants any indication from the government as to your position, it is certainly agreeable to us, and we urge that in all the circumstances the Ottawa City Police are the proper group to be called in, and we would hope that they would be.

Hon. Norman A. Cafik (Minister of State (Multiculturalism)): Mr. Speaker, this is what I think is a question of privilege arising from the comments you have made in respect of the two alleged buggings here in the House of Commons, and more particularly relating to the alleged bugging device found in the offices of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark). I want to raise one point that I think is quite substantive. At page 695 of *Hansard* yesterday Your Honour is reported as stating:

> I should advise the House it is our understanding that Bell Canada will be provided with this piece of equipment to examine in their laboratories.

Yesterday I was left with the impression that they were still in the hands of some other group, whether it be the opposition, or left in the office still intact, I do not know. I think the point is very important in this sense, that if that alleged bugging device, which Bell Telephone at one time indicated was a piece of standard equipment, if in fact that diode or whatever it is technically called, has been removed from that telephone at the present time and is in the hands of someone other than the security forces of the House of Commons, it seems to me that is a very serious problem.

[Mr. La Salle.]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The matter is under my responsibility for investigation. There may be questions that might arise when the investigation is completed. The question which the hon. member raises at the present time may be very valid. I think it would be very dangerous, however, if on a day-to-day basis we attempt to deal with interim questions.

I have attempted to make the interim reports very brief. I could expand on them, but until the investigation is completed and I am making a final report to the House, it seems to me that we have to let the matter take its course. If I were to entertain different questions of interpretation along the way, it seems to me it would simply get too complicated to handle. I really think the right course is to follow it through. I know of a number of concerns by hon. members. I am attempting to take those into account and manage them as best I can. I really do not think, however, that we have to get into interim comments.

If, after the investigation is concluded and a report has to be made to the House, and some suggested action has to be taken, it seems to me that all phases of the investigation would then be open to comment in some way at that time. I really think it would be most complicated to attempt to open it for comment as we go along in each step. I would prefer to hold off any comments of privilege or order or anything else in that regard, until we finalize the investigation.

Mr. Cafik: Mr. Speaker, I would just say I agree with that procedure. I wanted to enter a reservation of a concern that has only come to my attention from reading *Hansard*, so that I would not be prohibited from raising that question at the appropriate time following the tabling of your report on this matter.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Poulin) on a point of order.

Mr. Poulin: Mr. Speaker, reluctantly it is on the matter you have just addressed yourself to, a matter which I, following the Attorney General (Mr. Basford), addressed to you last week. I felt at that time that at the soonest possible moment proper professional police authorities should be brought in to investigate this matter. I mentioned the Ottawa City Police at that time, also the Ontario Provincial Police, as well as possibly the RCMP.

Your Honour has conducted this matter in a most appropriate way, for which I for one commend you, in a most difficult situation. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe, however, that the rights and immunities and privileges of members of this House of Commons, on whatever side they sit, extend to a breach of the Criminal Code, by the commission of an offence under the Criminal Code, an indictable offence, of which a member has knowledge.

I would point out that it was ten days ago, on October 31, that this alleged breach of the criminal law was brought to the attention of this House in a very dramatic way—and I noted Your Honour's words that after discussing it with the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay) today, it was his desire expressed to you today, not earlier, that it be—