

I would just like to assure him that my motives are very much based on the hope that he may take his responsibilities and correct the actions which go on in the Conservative party so that there will not be seized the advantage of prejudices which do exist. If the Leader of the Opposition does not know how extensive they are, I ask him to accept the offer I also extended to the hon. member for Joliette (Mr. La Salle), and that is to let me take him to certain areas in the west and let him hear how deeply these divisions are sown. I have the hope that his party, as one of the traditional and ancient parties in this country, will adopt a standard designed to unite the country and not divide it and feed on prejudice.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We are on very doubtful procedural grounds here. The Leader of the Opposition has been given the floor. He made a request by way of intervention which does not in any way relate to a procedural matter. It certainly is not a point of order. It certainly is not a question of privilege. The procedural matter has been settled. The debate will go on for the rest of the afternoon, and there will be all kinds of speeches and suggestions made during the course of the balance of the debate. But there really is no procedural basis upon which we can now go on to recognize other hon. members so that they can make other contributions to a non-procedural point.

Mr. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West): Mr. Speaker, may I respectfully submit that the only retraction here has been about lies and deceptions and urgings to hate. I as a member of the Conservative party in the House have also been accused of seizing every opportunity to encourage feelings of hate and antipathy in this country. There has been no withdrawal of that statement by the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang).

● (1522)

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: Hon. gentlemen opposite can howl all they like; we have our reputation to defend, Mr. Speaker. At page 6127 of *Hansard* the minister has clearly labelled every member of the Conservative party in the House by saying:—they seize upon every—opportunity—to encourage feelings of hate and antipathy in this country.

I have never done that, nor has anyone else on this side of the House. So I put it you, Mr. Speaker, that the minister has not retracted that part of his remark.

An hon. Member: The decision has been rendered.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member misunderstands, and I will say it one more time. Procedurally, members of the House of Commons are restricted in making allegations in various forms of unparliamentary language against members of the House of Commons. They are not under the same constraints in respect of other groups of people. Therefore, if

Privilege—Mr. Hnatyshyn

any member of the House feels himself aggrieved as part of a larger group, there are several recourses for him. If it is a political aspersion, it can be defended in a political circle; if it is a debating point, it can be carried on in the debate this afternoon. But on procedural grounds, the minister has made an allegation which, in my opinion, indicated it may be directed at members of the House of Commons, and in so far as it was, it was unparliamentary. Therefore, I insisted that it be withdrawn in respect of members of the House of Commons.

I think hon. members should understand that the precedents indicate quite clearly that a general aspersion against a group of people, whether it happens to include members of the House of Commons or not, is not to be included in those parliamentary categories. Therefore, whether a member of the House of Commons incidentally, as part of a larger group, feels himself aggrieved by the aspersion is beside the point.

In any case, I have ruled on the matter procedurally and the minister has indicated his withdrawal of any unparliamentary remarks in the sense that they might have been directed at members of the opposition here, and that closes the matter procedurally.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, what is my position as regards the challenge made by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark)? I was asked some questions by the Leader of the Opposition. Are you ruling that it is not in order for me to answer them at this time?

Mr. Speaker: I felt that I should indicate a response of equal proportion. I thought that response was taken up by the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang). If the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) were to make a reply at this time, it seems to me that it would have to be only with the unanimous consent of the House.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, just before we deal with the matter of unanimous consent, may I say that I hope we will not get into this matter too deeply, and I will tell you why, sir. Just after you made your ruling and after the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) had spoken for the last time—and we will make our judgment on what he said—the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Stanfield) was on his feet trying to get the floor, but you did not see him—and I use that expression in the procedural sense. I think that if the issue is going to be opened up—and the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) will be allowed to speak if he wishes to do so—then I think the hon. member for Halifax should be allowed to do so as well, and any other member of the House of Commons. I merely point that out to you, sir, to indicate the extent to which we might very well be proceeding if you adopt the practice of asking for unanimous consent.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I had indicated earlier my disposition of the matter and I said that the Leader of the Opposition had been given the floor, as is often the case on an