

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

[Translation]

**PRIVILEGE**

MR. SERRÉ—IMPROPER POLITICAL IDENTIFICATION OF MEMBER

**Mr. Gaétan-J. Serré (Nickel Belt):** Mr. Speaker, last Tuesday I put a question in the house to the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Cadieux). Now, in yesterday's issue of *Le Droit*, I am referred to as a Conservative member of parliament.

I consider that a serious insult not only to me but also to the people who elected me.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Serré:** I would point out that even though I am surrounded—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Serré:** —by Conservative members—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member. He stated his question of privilege, but I must remind him that according to Standing Orders he should have given notice of it to the Chair.

I have always tried to insist on this point and I believe that if I made an exception in this particular instance, it would be very difficult for me in the future to apply or to enforce the rules which stipulate that notice must be given.

Under these circumstances, I do not think that the hon. member should be allowed to carry further the question of privilege he has just raised.

**Mr. Serré:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that even though I am surrounded by Conservative members, the latter have not yet had enough influence over me, not even the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond (Mr. MacInnis)—

[English]

**Mr. Baldwin:** On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, I am sure this party would be willing to give unanimous consent because our social standing is being seriously endangered by this sort of thing.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. MacInnis:** On the point of order, Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I have ruled that there is no question of privilege. The hon. member on the original point of order

[Mr. Speaker.]

was actually pursuing a question of privilege. If hon. members want to debate this kind of point they are free to do so, but as far as I am concerned I think we should go on with the business of the house.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, obviously some people never know when they are lucky.

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD****EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

POSSESSION OF ATOMIC BOMB BY ISRAEL—CANADIAN NON-PROLIFERATION EFFORTS

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to change the tone of the discussion by asking the Prime Minister a very serious question arising from the apparent confirmation that Israel possesses the atomic bomb and that Arab states are seeking nuclear weapons from the Soviet Union. Will the Prime Minister say whether Canada, as one of the signatories of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, will consult with our allies in an effort to keep the nuclear ingredient out of the already tense situation in the Middle East?

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps I might be permitted to reply to the hon. Leader of the Opposition. Of course, we have no means of knowing about the accuracy of the reports which have appeared in the press. The Israeli government has affirmed that Israel would not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons in the area. In a press report Mr. Gideon Saggi said:

Israel is not a nuclear state and, just as has been stated in the past, will not be the first to introduce atomic weapons into the area. The reports are speculative, inaccurate and unauthoritative.

That is the statement of the government of Israel. As far as the Canadian government is concerned, we share the hope of the Leader of the Opposition and, I am sure, of all members of this house that these reports are not true. We hope that Israel is not acquiring nuclear weapons. Canada, as one of the first countries to ratify the non-proliferation treaty, has urged nations, including Israel, to sign and ratify that treaty, which should preclude the acquisition of nuclear weapons by additional countries. We would hope that Israel would accede to that treaty and we are urging her to do so. This would of course, effectively end all speculation.