

Inquiries of the Ministry

asked a responsible and reasonable question of the government. The minister stated in answer to that question that the matter was under consideration, but he was asked whether any representation has been made by the government to the automobile manufacturers concerning the changes being made in the United States, to preserve the lives of people within this country. Surely there was nothing unreasonable in that question. I submit with the greatest deference that it was a proper question and that the answer is one that Canadians want to know, because of the tremendous massacre which is taking place today on the roads of this country.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question put by the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi was of course along the same line as the argument submitted by the right hon. Leader of the Opposition. It was not a question; it was an argument, and this is the reason the Chair could not accept it.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I ask the question. Has any representation been made by the government to the manufacturers asking for the information and the assurance that was referred to by the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi? There is no argument in that.

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): The original question was, has any member of the government made such an inquiry. I will be glad to look into the matter.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Very good. Then we have the answer.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Villeneuve.

Mr. Caouette: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. For the last several weeks, and I think this is for the information—

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Following the question asked by the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Graftey), I think that this point of order can enlighten the house.

Some people are trying to downgrade the automobile industry in Canada and to play

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

politics with that matter. The hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi is sending up a trial balloon which is clearly and purely political.

The automobile industry is not responsible for accidents; road hogs, somewhat like Conservative members—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Caouette: —are to blame for accidents.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): That is not a point of order; sit down.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am convinced that after thinking it over the hon. member for Villeneuve will admit that there is not really any point of order. He submitted an argument which, to a certain extent, answers the one which was put forward by the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi.

It is obvious that we are moving toward a debate on that matter. The question period is not meant for debate but for asking questions. I feel that there is not any point of order about the matter which the hon. member is bringing up at this time.

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I again rise on a point of order. The hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi does not know anything at all about automobiles.

[*English*]

Mr. Graftey: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of personal privilege, the first I have raised in eight years in this house. The hon. member for Villeneuve has raised a point regarding my motives in this issue. I think most members in the house know about my motives. I would say to the hon. member that in so far as he is an automobile dealer, he has a conflict of interest when he gets up and speaks in this house.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. John Addison (York North): Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of privilege and say that I have been an automobile dealer for the last 10 years and have no conflict of interest in this respect. The safety of the people of Canada is my concern, just as much as it is the concern of the hon. member on the other side of the house. I should also like to point out to the hon. member—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Two questions of privilege have been raised, and I suggest that we return to other matters which might be considered by the house at this time.