

An hon. Member: They want to yell at the lady, but they do not want to listen to what she has to say.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I have been listening to the remarks of all hon. members and I can reassure the parliamentary secretary that there was no unparliamentary language used.

Mrs. Appolloni: The Leader of the New Democratic Party, with his usual rhetoric, asked for, indeed demanded, a thorough investigation.

An hon. Member: What is wrong with that?

Mrs. Appolloni: I would like to point out to this House that for two solid days that is exactly what I have been promising this House on behalf of my department. There will be a thorough investigation. So much for some of the pious rhetoric of the Leader of the New Democratic Party.

I must point out yet again that these tests took place 27 years ago. That means that they took place before some members of this House were even born.

An hon. Member: To get an issue they can agree on, they had to go back 27 years.

Mrs. Appolloni: Madam Speaker, this explains to some extent, I hope, the difficulty in finding details immediately of an event which occurred 27 years ago. In fact, my information is that one person particularly involved in these experiments is extremely ill. He is in a coma and has been so from another disease totally unrelated to these experiments. Unfortunately, we cannot get information from him because of his own health problems.

● (1530)

There are other problems. The Leader of the New Democratic Party suggested that this investigation should extend to all of Canada. I agree with him. The department fully intends to make it extend to all of Canada. However, I am sure that even the Department of National Defence, marvellous as it is, perhaps the best in the free world—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Appolloni: —will need a little more than two days to come up with all the details of something that happened 27 years ago.

I noted some of the comments of the hon. member for Provencher (Mr. Epp). Here again I should perhaps check the written *Hansard*. It occurs to me that he made reference today and yesterday as well to the supposition that these tests had not finished, that they were still continuing. I repeat, as I have said for the past two days, the tests in Winnipeg were stopped in 1953 after, I believe, the July to September period in which they were taking place.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow) I believe was a member of the municipal council at that time. I do not have copies of the minutes. I do not even know if that

Privilege—Mr. Sargeant

hon. member was present at the meeting on the day this discussion was conducted. However, to say that he was not aware of it and to say that, in effect, the authorities themselves did not know about it is quite a long step to take. I would say that just because the hon. member did not know about it does not mean that the authorities, the competent ones, did not in fact know about it. Therefore, to imply that just because of lack of personal knowledge the whole practice was secret is a fallacy.

Reference has been made to Professor LaBella. Without in any way impugning the integrity and reputation of Professor LaBella, I wish to draw the attention of the House to my remarks the other day when I said that pharmacologists, I think my words were, just as economists, unfortunately do not always agree with each other. What Professor LaBella says he may stand by, but it is my information that other pharmacologists have assured the Department of National Defence that there was no hazard to human life.

I come to my final point, Madam Speaker. If those members who stood up in their places today to protest my reply are truly concerned about protecting their constituents, I ask them why they do not give the department the information they are supposed to have so that the department can go further and move quickly with its own investigation. They would do that if their concern is genuine. However, if their concern is only to make “brownie points” and continue to scare people, then I rest my case. I do not know what else to say.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Speaker: There is absolutely nothing, but just nothing, in the rules which allows a member who is not satisfied with an answer a minister has given to one of his questions to raise the matter as a question of privilege. Today we have another example of a question of privilege which flows from an answer given by a minister to a member and the member not being satisfied either with the quality of the answer or the kind of information that has been given.

Hon. members know there are other procedures that can be followed if a member is not satisfied with the information he has received. I urge hon. members to use these other procedures rather than take up the time of the House after question period when that time should be taken up by something else.

I am in the position that I must listen to members in order to assure myself whether there is or is not a question of privilege. Therefore, I have welcomed some of the interventions. Today I listened mostly to members who come from the region where this incident occurred because I felt they probably had a specific interest in raising the matter. However, all of them were debating the question.

Therefore, I must rule that this is not a question of privilege. I will shortly no longer be formally telling members, when they are not satisfied with an answer given by a minister, that they may not raise it as a question of privilege. I ask for the co-operation of hon. members in this regard.