should pose a question was in recognition of that fact. It was not because I had deliberately solicited that question beforehand.

It is indeed my understanding that the students were given to understand that Howard McCurdy, who could be depended upon to ask a question, would do so and they could have broadcast this totally without my knowledge. That I assert clearly.

There are any number of rumours that have been circulating around this place. I think in regard to these charges it should be noted, in keeping with what I said about the Sergeant-at-Arms informing or not informing the various caucuses, that it was only on that side of the House that there was a ready inclination to jump up and take note of the events up there and to accuse me of having been involved, when I did not even know what was going on. Clearly, in my being accused, Mr. Speaker, if ever there was an example of guilt by association this is a clear example of it. If we are going to talk about guilt by association and guilt by rumour, we have the fact, evidently admitted by the hon. member, that the Sergeant-at-Arms knew that there was going to be a demonstration and did not inform us.

I am told that there are a good many others around this place who knew about it besides the students and the government benches. I am given to understand, by rumour, that the Table understood it. There is another rumour that the Speaker's office knew about it. It appears by rumour that the only person who did not know about it was Howard McCurdy and the New Democratic caucus.

Some hon. members: And the Bloc Québécois.

[*Translation*]

Mr. McCurdy: The Bloc Québécois didn't know either.

[*English*]

The hon. member says that several of those who are involved in the demonstration had passes to the gallery. I do not know whether any of those involved in the demonstration had passes or not. I tell you quite frankly, as has been my habit, there were passes distributed among students who asked for them. After all, there were a great many of them here for a CFS press conference that I was supposed to have attended and did not. But because they have faith in me I guess in terms of my interest in them, they came to my office and asked for passes.

Mr. Speaker, to have the hon. member seriously suggest that because certain individuals had passes signed by me in their possession that I was therefore implicated in the demonstration is an outrageous accusation that demeans the intelligence of the member who made that accusation.

Further we have it that the students had a poster that said they were going to protest the 3 per cent tax. By God, if you are going to have contempt hearings against members of Parliament for what their constituents say on posters, you are going to have to indict every member in this House for contempt. That is an absolutely outrageous extrapolation.

I have no apology to make and I am prepared any old time to defend myself against any charges of contempt and to demonstrate that the member who should be held in contempt is the member with the contemptible accusations—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I would like to participate in this debate very briefly since I would guess most of the students that were here yesterday were from my riding. The University of Ottawa is in the riding of Ottawa—Vanier and I would like to make some comments.

Certainly I have to agree that there is a dispute as to whether all the facts are before the House. Whether or not there is a *prima facie* case, Mr. Speaker, is up to you to decide. When that motion is put, we will decide following your advice. I do believe that we have a serious dispute here as to fact. The member for Peace River made a serious accusation which I do not think we can slough off easily. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we will await your decision on that.

I would just like to tell the House that I have a letter, signed by Jane Arnold, chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students. I will not read the whole letter, but I will read one paragraph which I think is pertinent to our debate: "As chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students, I can neither condone or support the actions which took place in the House of Commons on the afternoon of Wednesday, October 17, 1990. I would like to inform members of Parliament the federation played no role whatsoever in this escapade." This letter is dated October 18.