

*Questions of Privilege*

question of privilege, I suggest he take it up with his cabinet colleague.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Having heard the question of privilege raised and the comments made by the hon. member for Cape Breton South I think there is an obvious divergence of opinion between the two hon. members, and the matter should be allowed to rest there for the time being.

[*Translation*]

MR. GREGOIRE—REPLY TO RESIGNATION  
SUGGESTION BY MANPOWER MINISTER

**Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe):** Mr. Speaker, I also wish to rise on a question of privilege.

It is based on the statement made yesterday by the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Marchand) to the effect that the member for Lapointe must—he did not say “should” but “must”—vacate his seat, because he is a usurper in this house.

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

**Mr. Grégoire:** He made it clear, Mr. Speaker, that he was alluding not only to the member for Lapointe but also to the two other Quebec members who spoke out for the independence of Quebec, as well as to all members of parliament and of the Quebec legislature who, in the future, will endorse and support the independence of Quebec.

Under the circumstances, Mr. Speaker, and in view of the charges made by the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, it is now his duty to prove to the house and to the public that a member who changes seats in this house or prefers to fight for his ideas instead of betraying his fellow-citizens, is compelled to resign by the procedure and standing orders. I think it is the minister's duty to support his statement by evidence. If he has no evidence, if it is merely a wish because he does not like to see independentists in the house, well I state right here that I am ready to resign and to do so immediately.

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

**Mr. Grégoire:** But I would like my gesture to be meaningful, and since it is the opinion of the electors of the riding of Lapointe that the Minister of Manpower and Immigration wants, I am ready to resign if he will do the same and stand for election in the riding of Lapointe. I will be a candidate for the independence of Quebec; let him run as a candidate for federalism, and then we will get the opinion of the electors of the riding of Lapointe.

[Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South).]

Mr. Speaker, I never denied the minister the right to sit here even if we know that money rather than convictions helped him get elected. Therefore, I feel that he should respect also the other members of the house and I challenge him—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Grégoire:** —to run for parliament in the riding of Lapointe.

[*English*]

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Presenting reports by standing and special committees.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Grégoire:** Mr. Speaker, may I know whether the Minister of Manpower and Immigration accepts the challenge?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I must say to the hon. member that there is no question of privilege. In addition, if he so wishes, I shall inform him of the considered opinion I reached after studying the notice he gave me a few hours ago. I considered the matter in the light of citation No. 110 of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, fourth edition, which stipulates that there is a breach of privilege in cases of libel against a member of parliament. More specifically, and I quote:

—that to print or publish any libels reflecting upon any member of the house for or relating to his service therein was a high violation of the rights and privileges of the house.

Therefore, to justify a question of privilege, the comments attributed to an hon. member must be of a libellous nature. I do not think that is the case with the minister's comments concerning the hon. member for Lapointe. The minister expressed the view that an hon. member cannot change his party allegiance without asking for a new mandate from his electors. According to the hon. member for Lapointe, nothing under our rules or parliamentary practice makes it compulsory for an hon. member to tend in his resignation under such circumstances. Obviously, there is a conflict of opinion between the two hon. members, but such a disagreement is no ground, in my opinion, for a question of privilege.

**Mr. Grégoire:** Mr. Speaker, I abide by your ruling. All I can say is that the Minister of Manpower and Immigration shows that he is coward by refusing to take up the challenge.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.