

Administration of Justice

Mr. Nielsen: We are talking of leading up to the inquiry.

Mr. Greene: I am speaking of the terms of reference. No one was named. Yet members of parliament and Privy Councillors were called before that commission, as could have been any member of parliament or Privy Councillor. I see no difference between the two.

Mr. Woolliams: The Minister of Agriculture has confused two things. One is the terms of reference in the order in council and the other is the charges made by the hon. member for Yukon and perhaps others which led up to the order in council. The hon. member for Yukon named names. He gave the dates, he gave the places and the persons involved. Some may have been in the House of Commons; others were outside the House of Commons. The Minister of Justice has yet to name anyone except that he has implicated a whole slate of Privy Councillors in the Conservative party. I am sure the Minister of Agriculture understands the logic of the situation. He is quite right. Any member of parliament could have been called before the Dorion commission. Any witness might have been called. He himself might have been called as a witness. But they were not called as unnamed accused.

Mr. McIlraith: Yes, they were.

Mr. Woolliams: Will the Minister of Agriculture tell me of any precedent either in law or in parliament which allows charges to be made against people who are unnamed? What it is is an inquisition. That is what he wants. This is the punishment that the Minister of Justice and his party seek to impose because we have looked at the dirt and the skeletons in the closets of the Liberal party. This is the punishment. We have the threat of the Prime Minister and the threats made by other ministers.

To you as house leader, sir, I say this. Many of us entered this house in 1957 or 1958 but you are a senior member and have been here a long time. Although we differ in our politics we have learned to respect you. Personally I think you have made a lot better house leader than the former house leader. We have often admired your fairness. But today, sir, you asked me a question, the import of which you yourself do not accept in your own mind, namely, that Privy Councillors may be charged but not named. In view of the kind of lawyer you are and your prestige in the city I cannot believe that you

[Mr. Greene.]

agree with that kind of justice. I am sorry to hit you that hard because I have always thought of you as a gentleman.

Mr. McIlraith: Do you know any more jokes?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I think the kind of remarks the hon. member for Bow River is making now are an indication that it might be a far better practice to direct his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. Woolliams: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate it does not relieve me of my responsibility to the Chair if I am forced to answer hon. members across the way. Therefore I am remiss if I do not address you on all occasions. Let me summarize, Mr. Speaker. In this situation the house should go into committee of the whole and ask the Minister of Justice who are involved, what files he has seen, what facts he has, what evidence he has, and what is behind all these smear tactics. When we have this information then the situation will be different. There will then be a fair inquiry, not an inquisition.

Mr. Lambert: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture—it is unfortunate he has slipped from the chamber—reminded me of someone who would take a pail of water and throw into it a handful of fine sand. All he did was to blur the picture. He was making use of red herrings and going off into the Rivard matter which has no connection with this particular case.

The minister and others should distinguish two matters in their minds. First of all, there is the one to which no exception is taken by the opposition and that is the inquiry which was put forward and referred to on March 4. Although I joined the Privy Council much later than others, I am still a Privy Councillor and by inference implicated—

Mr. Nielsen: By the minister.

Mr. Lambert: —at a press conference outside the house. It has been instructive that the minister has not had the moral courage and intestinal fortitude to stand up in the house and say what he said outside. I find it singularly touching to have all these complaints coming from the government side about smears and what have you when the hon. member has the privilege of standing up and denying all the accusations which he made outside this house.