

*Privilege—Mr. Jarvis*

national security, the Prime Minister said that they should know nothing about security, they do not know about barn burnings, they do not know about breaking and entering, they do not know what the security services are doing, but in the case of the hon. member for Leeds, they know every small detail? The Prime Minister is not staying out of this one, nor is the Solicitor General. Because it affects the hon. member for Leeds, they both have their snouts right into the trough.

Ever since October we have been told, "No, we are not going to have anything to do with security. We are the cabinet, we do not muck around with that, we might be accused of interfering with the police". But I say, yes, I accuse them of interfering with the police and security forces. That is what they are doing now in the case of the hon. member for Leeds. After the statements the Prime Minister made in the House telling us that we are breaching national security if we do not do what they are telling us to do, and after the Deputy Prime Minister ended with a threat to all members of the House of Commons, I say he will not influence me one whit, one jot, or one tittle.

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

**Mr. Crosbie:** If the hon. member for Leeds is persecuted by the bunch opposite, I will be right there with him if he ever goes to jail, and so will everybody on this side.

The Deputy Prime Minister had the gall today to glare at us and say this matter will not end today. In other words he meant that they have not finished yet with their writs and searches, and with the media. "We are not finished with you yet," he said. I tell him what he can kiss. I will not say it in the House, Mr. Speaker, but I for one do not agree with the version of the Deputy Prime Minister of what are our rights.

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

**Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster):** Mr. Speaker, I will be brief, I would like to deal with the specific question of privilege because it is similar to the question of privilege which was raised when the Solicitor General (Mr. Blais) was initially appointed to his present role. At that time the questions that were asked, which dealt with the Keable inquiry or the McDonald inquiry, met with silence. There was a blanket refusal to deal with the subject, and the ground that was given by the Solicitor General at the time was that it was a matter which was before another body or another inquiry. That decision was subsequently reversed by the Solicitor General himself. What I say is that today the Solicitor General has made exactly the same kind of decision. He will now refuse to answer any questions dealing with the subject related to the hon. member for Leeds (Mr. Cossitt), or to deal with anything surrounding that.

It is vital and important that there be a response to questions by this government where a warrant is issued that is as serious as the one which affects the out-tapes, not merely the videotapes, of Global and CTV. The principle of freedom of speech is so intimately involved in this question that surely it is incumbent on the Solicitor General to respond without uncon-

[Mr. Crosbie.]

sciously misleading the House. Where I say the House is being unconsciously misled is in the excuse for not answering the question, that it is a matter which deals with national security.

The questions I asked today were, first, who initiated the issuance of those warrants, was it the Solicitor General's office? On the surface of it, it is not a question which would be a matter affecting national security. My second question was whether a legal opinion had been given by the law officers of the Crown in respect of the rights and privileges of members of parliament vis-à-vis the Official Secrets Act. Again that met with a refusal to answer. The minister would not say that he has even received appropriate legal advice with regard to the actions that had been taken.

What we have before us in another example of a blanket refusal to deal with the subject. The government cannot get away with that. It can refuse to answer a question, but there is a political ramification when a government refuses to answer such questions day by day because it says it does not like them. That is a violation of my privileges, Mr. Speaker, a violation of the privileges of every member of the House when there is a refusal, not to answer a single question, but to answer any questions on the general subject. That is exactly what the Solicitor General did when matters were before the McDonald and Keable inquiries, and that is exactly what he did again in the House today. He has simply refused to answer questions on the total subject.

Will we now be in the position to ask any more questions concerning a fellow member of the House? That appears to be the position of the Solicitor General. He will take the political consequences of his refusal to answer these questions. In terms of privileges, I submit it is a violation of our privileges when any minister gives a blanket refusal and says in effect, "I will not answer any questions on that subject." This is a complete dereliction of his duty to members of the House and of his responsibility as a cabinet minister.

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert):** Mr. Speaker, there remains but little to say except to analyse some of the reasons that have activated the government in this attack on the hon. member for Leeds (Mr. Cossitt).

● (1612)

I recall very well that very recently some mention was made to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) about the hon. member for Leeds, and the answer the Prime Minister gave bore a relationship to an expression he used one time in this House which, interpreted, was quite different from the words which had been used. "Fuddle duddle" is approximately the expression of the Prime Minister in its original form concerning the hon. member for Leeds.

I am sorry hon. members opposite have all gone. The Solicitor General (Mr. Blais) has disappeared. The Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen) has disappeared. Where have they gone? Have they gone to western Canada? After all, there is a pilgrimage going on there. As a member for Saskatchewan I am deeply concerned to find that the minister