

Administration of Justice

Mr. MacEachen: If you want to call them accusations, that is your word, but in the letter he stated that his allegations—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I should like to interrupt the minister. My understanding is that the minister took the floor on a point of order while the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) had the floor.

Mr. Starr: May I ask the minister a question at this point? He said the proper way to proceed is to have this matter referred to a commission of inquiry. Without specifically naming persons or laying specific charges, is the minister implying that he wishes the hon. member for Victoria-Carleton and the hon. member for Calgary North to appear before that inquiry? Is that what he means?

Mr. Nielsen: And all the rest of them.

Mr. Starr: These hon. members for whom the minister said he had such great respect.

Mr. MacEachen: I have.

Mr. Starr: Yet you want them to appear before such an inquiry.

Mr. MacEachen: I have not suggested that.

Mr. Starr: Well, what else is going to be done?

Mr. MacEachen: It has been suggested, and hon. members ought to be very clear about this, by the Minister of Justice that the former prime minister mishandled a security case. That is the nub of the matter.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Lewis: On March 4, not on March 10.

Mr. MacEachen: The issue here is a statement, an allegation, a charge if you like, by the Minister of Justice that the former prime minister mishandled a security case.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

● (12:30 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I should like to bring to the attention of the minister that the hon. member for Yukon had the floor. I can only assume that the hon. member for Yukon has no objection to the minister continuing at this point. If he does object, then he has the floor.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. MacEachen: I was speaking on the point of order that was raised.

[Mr. Nielsen.]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest that we not complicate things too much. The minister might like to complete his remarks, with the assent of the hon. member for Yukon.

Mr. Nielsen: I thought I had the floor.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona perhaps did not notice that the hon. member for Yukon had agreed to allow the minister to raise his question.

Mr. Nugent: Mr. Speaker, you have heard the minister on a point of order. You have heard several. I have been waiting to speak on the point of order. I would ask Your Honour to bring the minister to order. It is not up to the hon. member for Yukon to grant permission. After completing the point of order the minister started on a question of privilege. I would still like to speak on the point of order.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps I might suggest to hon. members that the minister should be allowed to complete his remarks. If the hon. member wants to speak after, I shall be pleased to recognize him.

Mr. Nielsen: I should like to hear the minister, and I intend to rise after he has finished.

Mr. Cameron (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): The minister had agreed to answer a question which I think I started. My question is: Is the minister proposing that this commission of inquiry is to confine itself to the investigation of the charges made by the Minister of Justice in this house, or is he excluding the charges that he made at the press conference?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker—

An hon. Member: All right, Favreau.

Mr. MacEachen: It is absolutely clear that the judicial inquiry will investigate all aspects of this matter.

An hon. Member: What matter?

Mr. MacEachen: And the letter of the Minister of Justice to the Prime Minister which was read earlier indicated willingness on the part of the Minister of Justice—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. MacEachen: —to have all aspects gone into. His statements in the house, his statements at the press conference in regard to this matter can be gone into and gone into