

Supply—Justice

are there for. The Minister of Justice is not in his position to act as a judge. His law officers are not employed to act as judges. The law officers of the minister's department, as I have said, are there to determine whether or not there is evidence on which to base the laying of an information, and from there on this becomes the responsibility of the courts.

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. With the new system we have in the house each time the hon. member for Yukon pounds his fingers on the table we get a noise in our ears.

An hon. Member: That is better than what you say normally.

Mr. Grégoire: I know it is not easy for the hon. member to remember not to hit his desk during arguments of this kind, but I would please ask him to not thump his fingers on the desk, because that is no use to us at all. It just makes a noise.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Chairman, I have always said that the hon. member for Lapointe needs a good thumping. I have listened in the house for several years now to the hon. member for Lapointe and I was delighted to hear his remarks this evening, because they indicate his flexibility and capacity with the English language, that other official language of this country.

Mr. Knowles: The thumping is bilingual.

Mr. Nielsen: The minister dealt at great length with the fact that Spencer admitted his identity. I ask him again to search his memory very carefully and to search his newspaper clippings on his files, and then reconsider what he has said in light of the record. He knows as well as I do about this business of the program, "This Hour Has 7 Days," and about the methods used by the C.B.C. He knows that they cut and splice and cut and splice.

Mr. Cardin: You can say that again.

Mr. Nielsen: I think the expert in this field is the Prime Minister himself, having regard to the famous Pearson film. There were more cuts and splices lying on the cutting room floor after that filming than ever before.

An hon. Member: Have you seen it?

Mr. Nielsen: The minister says that no member of the house has asked about the

damage Spencer has done to national security, but what damage would it do to national security if the minister and the government were to accept the reasonable request of the opposition to hold an in camera inquiry? I suggest that not one scintilla of damage would be done to national security.

Mr. Cardin: Why should there be such an inquiry?

Mr. Nielsen: The minister asks why we want an in camera inquiry. We want one to satisfy precisely that attribute which the minister himself holds out as being the acme of parliamentary function and the function of justice in this country: To establish the truth, to establish whether or not the decisions that have been taken by the Prime Minister are good, and to establish whether or not the positions taken by the minister in pre-judgment and in convicting and sentencing Mr. Spencer were good.

Mr. Cardin: Are you going to do that in respect of every decision the government takes?

Mr. Nielsen: We only wish that procedure followed in respect of that one sort of action, and the manner in which that action is taken. We suggest that these matters should be submitted to an independent judicial assessment. As the hon. member for St. John's West—east, up, down or centre—has said, justice must not only be done, it must also appear to be done; and it does not appear to have been done under the present circumstances.

In the time left to me I should like to point out to the minister some remarks made by the Minister of Justice for the province of Quebec in commenting on this debate, as he is reported in the *Montreal Star* of February 26 last. In that article Mr. Wagner is quoted as having said:

It has become more and more evident that organized crime, not only in Quebec but in the whole of the country, has created a veritable state of emergency.

Mr. Wagner went on to support the submissions of the opposition, that there be convened a royal commission on crime. I do not see how the minister can excuse any further delay in this matter. His own Prime Minister led the people of this country to believe precisely that which Mr. Wagner said, when he spoke to them last June 29. The impression that was left in the minds of all Canadians