

Administration of Justice

reference to this matter. This to me is the crux of the whole situation.

Several ministers of the government and several hon. members have raised this question. Not as a member of parliament but as a Canadian I want to say that we should not spend two or three days debating such a question unless it is—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Woolliams: Let me just ask this question. Whose primary responsibility is this? Is this the Prime Minister's responsibility? Is it the government's and particularly, sir, the Minister of Justice? Is he responsible?

Mr. Nielsen: He will not get up.

Mr. Woolliams: In regard to the press conference he was cowardly because he would not say inside the house what he has said to the press.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Woolliams: Now he says, and I charge him with this, "I have not read the file". If he has not read the file how can he tell us what is in it? Has he got someone else to read the file to him? The Minister of Justice should, and I say this not only as a member of parliament but as a Canadian, stand and clear the air. He should make these charges so that we can get back to the business of the House of Commons. I say, and I do not care if it costs me my seat or if I lose the next election, that if we are going to have this sort of inquisition we must consider some of the most important aspects of the law. We have to consider the freedom and liberty of the individual. We have to consider the freedom and liberty of the Privy Councillors. Since when did a different law apply to Privy Councillors in this country than applies to the average citizen?

• (1:50 p.m.)

Mr. McIlraith: You should ask the hon. member for Yukon.

Mr. Woolliams: The hon. gentleman talks about the hon. member for Yukon. I am proud of the hon. member for Yukon who has dared to stand up in his place in this House of Commons. I know why the Liberal house leader says that. It is because in his own heart he does not condone today what is going on in his own government.

Mr. McIlraith: If the hon. member is interested in having this matter cleared up, that could be done in the proper way very quickly and very easily since it is a security matter,

by having a judicial commission of inquiry appointed. The hon. member knows he is making this scene because he is afraid to have this matter investigated.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, I would be very surprised if the house leader ever charged me or any member of the House of Commons with being afraid. I may be guilty of many faults but I do not think I have ever been afraid. I say to him that we would be prepared to have an inquiry of any kind, and I would be the first to agree to it, if the Minister of Justice would name names, set out the circumstances and disclose what is in the file. Therein lies the difference.

Mr. Greene: Would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Woolliams: Certainly.

Mr. Greene: The hon. member had some doubts, as I understood it, as to the difference in procedure between this case and Dorion. I think he invoked some argument that it might not be proper for Privy Councillor after Privy Councillor to be called as witnesses. I would ask the hon. member, what is the difference between this and the Dorion inquiry, where no member of parliament was named—

Mr. Nielsen: Yes, they were.

Mr. Greene: Please let me finish. I have granted that courtesy to hon. members opposite and I would ask them to do the same for me.

Mr. Woolliams: I will answer that question now.

Mr. Greene: May I finish?

Mr. Woolliams: No. Surely I can answer the question.

Mr. Greene: I have not completed my question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Bow River agreed to a question from the Minister of Agriculture. We might hear the end of the question and then he can reply.

Mr. Woolliams: Let him put a question but not make a speech. I know he is getting used to that stuff which he uses in his department.

Mr. Greene: I trust I will have many years to get used to the department. What I wish to ask is this. Within the terms of reference of the Dorion inquiry no cabinet minister or member of parliament was named. I believe I am correct in that.