

*Supply—Justice*

some advice which he thinks we should follow, I would like to ask him this question. If I as a lawyer were to publicly proclaim that the hon. member does not possess the attributes required to properly represent his constituency would he then think that I had the soundness of judgment that would warrant his recommending me as a lawyer to represent Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation?

**Mr. Pearson:** Why, of course he would!

**Mr. Regier:** I am very glad the hon. member asked that question. I would say that many of the men in my riding who openly advocated that I be defeated at the last election are honourable men and are worthy of appointment by any government. I do not like to see a government in office that pursues the idea that anyone who participates in election campaigns ought to be denied his rights as a Canadian citizen. I will say to the hon. member that there are as many liars in the legal profession as there are in any other profession in Canada today, if not more.

**An hon. Member:** Withdraw.

**Mr. Regier:** No, I will not withdraw that statement. The hon. member who is asking me to do that is a farmer. I say there are more honest agriculturists in Canada than there are honest lawyers. There are a lot of lawyers in the C.C.F. movement. There are many lawyers who realize that the day is coming when human rights will take precedence over property rights.

**The Chairman:** Order. I must remind the hon. member that at the present time we are discussing the estimates of the Department of Justice. I do not believe that subject has anything to do with the fact that there are some liars in the legal profession. I must tell the hon. member that he is completely out of order in pursuing this irrelevant discussion.

**Mr. Regier:** Mr. Chairman, I can assure you that I will not pursue the question of the number of liars there may be in the lawyer profession.

**Mr. Benidickson:** No, Mr. Chairman; the non-practising ones.

**Mr. Regier:** Mr. Chairman, I wish to ask the Minister of Justice a question with regard to the list referred to in the correspondence, which list the minister did not see fit to deny exists. I want to know how the list of acceptable attorneys is prepared and whether or not there was a complete revision of that list after the election of 1957 and how such a list might be made available to this committee?

**Mr. Fulton:** Mr. Chairman, as I explained before the dinner hour, it is one of the responsibilities of the Minister of Justice and a responsibility which I take most seriously, to advise my colleagues as to the lawyers in various parts of Canada who may be considered qualified to represent the government of Canada either as agents of the Minister of Justice or on an individual basis to act for the agencies of the ministers concerned.

This is a matter which I take extremely seriously because I believe that the standards of legal representation and the conduct of counsel representing the government, whether as agents of the minister or as solicitors or counsel retained in individual cases, are matters of the greatest concern and importance to the public of Canada. I, therefore, take this part of my duties extremely seriously.

I explained to the hon. gentleman before dinner that with respect to the advice which I tender to my colleagues, I tender it to them as part of my duties and in a fashion which represents or forms part of that interdepartmental or interministerial discussion which is, of course, a matter privileged from being produced in the house. I believe there may have been one inaccuracy in what I said before dinner because I said that we did not supply directly to the department or agencies thereof lists of persons who may be retained. I have checked the matter since and I find that as a matter of departmental administration, where other departments, such as the Department of National Revenue particularly and one or two others, are in a position where they constantly or frequently need on short notice the services of solicitors or counsel where such counsel particularly are the agents of the Minister of Justice, there I do provide to my colleagues and through them to their departments what might be called standing lists of agents. I am at pains to ensure that the agents so nominated are proper and worthy representatives of the government of Canada and are proper persons to act as agents of the Minister of Justice.

**Mr. Benidickson:** That includes the Bank of Canada?

**Mr. Fulton:** I shall refer to that matter of detail in a moment.

In regard to the other area in which I am called upon by my colleagues to advise them as to the names and qualifications of lawyers who may be retained in individual cases, I have explained this afternoon the basis upon which my assessment is made and the basis upon which I so advise my colleagues, and I have nothing to vary or retract in that connection. I shall, however, amplify what I said then by saying that I do take pains,