

a legal firm. It had about 20 names on fancy notepaper, and it threatened to sue me for a number of things that I had said about pensions, not necessarily in this House, but certainly those things have been said in this House as well.

I am not easily intimidated, Mr. Speaker, but I am not very wealthy either. I am not sure that I want to face that battery of lawyers in Toronto, so I have pretty well ceased and desisted from talking about that particular problem. While I would not say I have backed down, I certainly have been cautious.

I am sure that if many of us not trained in the law received a letter of that sort, or an indication in a press release that a judge said, "If you say those things outside the House of Commons I will have you in contempt of court and put you in jail", we would feel intimidated. That is really what happened in this case. Judges do not normally go around explaining why they make a certain decision. Questions were asked why the judge had made a decision in relation to bail and had prevented members of parliament from asking questions about it even in this House. They certainly could not talk to the person who could give a first-hand account of it, even privately outside this chamber, and get the information without the person who asked the question and the person who had the information being in contempt of court. To me, that is intimidation.

It often amazes those of us who are uninformed when we hear one lawyer address another as "my honourable friend", when you can see the knife about six inches long going into the back. It is "my honourable friend", "my honourable associate", "my honourable colleague", and that sort of thing—just mumbo-jumbo.

As a person who is not legally trained, it seemed to me that when the judge made that statement he was only making it in order to intimidate. He does not do that every time. Certainly ever time he makes a judgment he does not give a press release saying why he did certain things, and telling members of parliament that if they refer to it then they could be in contempt of court. I might suggest to the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) that if he should take a train to Montreal and say it out of court—

● (1622)

Mr. Baldwin: I cancelled one this week end.

Mr. Peters: —he would now have to wait for that judge to come back from his extended holiday in Greece. I am not suggesting that, Mr. Speaker, because I am damned sure the judge would put him in jail if he did it, if he has the power to do it. Therefore, he is intimidating him. I think for that reason your suggestion, Mr. Speaker, was an ideal one.

I am shocked at these government members trying to defend something that is indefensible, on behalf of the judiciary over which they have no control. They cannot answer questions in this House, they did not appoint these people for whom they are not responsible. It would seem to me they should start worrying a little more about members of parliament who may be intimidated by a judge.

Privilege—Mr. Baldwin

Certainly one of the cabinet ministers, in my opinion, was intimidated by a judge. They damn well think that that cabinet minister had the right to say that the guy needed a pair of glasses, that he certainly did not see a judicial situation very clearly. I think the minister was right. Certainly when he let those companies off, he was wrong. I do not think it is right for them to get up and go to the committee and defend the right of the RCMP to bug a member of parliament and say there is no privilege in that. He really did not get hurt. He did not say anything that incriminated him with his wife so, therefore, it is not a matter of privilege.

I would like the Liberal members of this House to show a little more concern for the individual member who may find himself in a position of being intimidated. While I know the member for Peace River is not being intimidated by this judge, I know he knows that he is making this case on our behalf because it may happen to someone else who may feel just as strongly about the law. I would suggest that it will be a member from Quebec who is being threatened by that same judiciary who will be the next on the list if we do not stand up for the limited privilege that we have in this House which, to me, is only the privilege of being protected against libel in this House. Sometimes we are allowed on behalf of our constituents to say what we think on their behalf, and assume that privilege on their behalf where it is not available to us as ordinary members of parliament on the street.

Mr. Speaker: Members who have contributed to this discussion have all put forward some very helpful views. As I indicated earlier, I want to give them careful consideration. If the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of Privy Council (Mr. Pinard), after examination of the original text in French, wants to make a further contribution, he ought to have the opportunity to do it, although I would hope he would do it very soon.

I want to reiterate that while I have the matter under reserve, the matter of any kind of agreed reference, as always in matters of this sort, remains open. Maybe some discussion can take place on that. If they do not, I would like to make it clear that when I put that idea forward it is an idea that can be taken under consideration really in every matter of privilege, I suppose. If it materializes, the Chair can be advised, and that is a happy resolution of the matter. If it does not materialize, I think it would be most inappropriate to consider that the mention of it by the Chair would be a preference expressed by the Chair for the resolution of the matter. That, I think, would be most improper. And in that atmosphere it is one that I would not want to contribute to in any way.

To close this matter from discussion at this time we ought to be clear on the documents we have ordered appended. Such as the quality of the copies that are available, I have the notice which the hon. member gave to me. It includes a French text and the translation to which reference has been made. For the sake of accuracy these will be the set of documents to be appended to today's *Hansard* and printed as a part of it. This clarifies the order that we made earlier, because there was some confusion about what text we were printing, particularly