

to the Solicitor General of Canada. If it is, would he advise the House of Commons that there were cases of this kind, and would he advise the House of Commons how many illegal actions the RCMP is believed by their commissioner to have been involved in, over what period of time they have occurred and under what ministers they have occurred?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Fox:** Mr. Speaker, as you and hon. members know, until June 17 last we took the position that the incident was of an extraordinary nature, an isolated case, indeed a very unusual one.

Since then we have learned, as I indicated in my statement in the House yesterday, that we had good reason to believe that there were perhaps other cases where the RCMP resorted to illegal practices, which I think fully justifies the establishment of a commission of inquiry.

The commission of inquiry will have to cast the light entirely and completely on the allegations, Mr. Speaker, but so far there is no indication that any minister of the Crown is involved in any way in the facts alleged.

● (1420)

[*English*]

PROPOSED INQUIRY BY COMMITTEE INTO DEGREE OF  
MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR FORCE

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Having in mind the slippery nature of the answers given—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Baldwin:**—and having in mind that the contents of the minister's statement made yesterday completely sweep away and destroy the basis on which the government's case has been rested in the last month on this issue, I should like to ask the minister, on this question of ministerial responsibility which, if I understand anything, means responsibility to the House—

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Baldwin:**—if the government will not yield to the reasonable suggestion of the leader of our party to have an inquiry into this question of responsibility and let a committee of the House find out to what extent, if at all, the members of the government have been deceiving parliament.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Baldwin:** While there is a rule in the House by which we accept what is said in the House, there are many people outside the House who are skeptical about the rule, are not bound by it, and do not feel the same way about it as we are compelled to feel here.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Francis Fox (Solicitor General):** Mr. Speaker, of course if the hon. member wants to talk of slippery slope, I would remind him that not long ago the opposition accused us

of having a police state within the government and of setting up a list of enemies, according to their own words. Conversely, they say there is no political control over the RCMP at present. There is indeed a slippery slope, but in my opinion within the opposition itself. As for ministerial responsibility, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the commission of inquiry has all the necessary powers to establish whether or not there were criminal activities and consequently to find out if there has been any cover-up or some other doubtful activities.

Mr. Speaker, the best way to discuss those allegations is not to submit them to a parliamentary committee, with all due respect we should have for these institutions—and I profess a lot of respect for them—because that kind of procedure might give rise to sectarian attitudes. Mr. Speaker, I think that the reputation of the RCMP should be discussed outside the political arena and it deserves to be judged in a fair and independent way as we proposed to the House yesterday.

[*English*]

INQUIRY WHETHER ASSURANCE RECEIVED FROM  
COMMISSIONER ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES TERMINATED

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** In light of the fact that the Solicitor General has withdrawn previous statements that the APLQ break-in was an isolated and unique incident, could he inform the House if he has received an iron-clad assurance from the commissioner of the RCMP that all illegal activities have now been terminated?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Francis Fox (Solicitor General):** Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that the instructions given to the RCMP are to carry out their activities within strictly legal boundaries and if ever there were cases where such instructions were not followed, the commissioner and the government would assume their responsibilities, as we indicated once again very specifically and clearly yesterday when, with the consent of the RCMP commissioner and on his advice, we undertook an inquiry on the entire issue.

[*English*]

SUGGESTION INQUIRY INTO MINISTERIAL ACCOUNTABILITY  
FOR ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES OF FORCE BE MANDATORY

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby):** I have a question for the Solicitor General. The minister knows that members on this side of the House have demanded a full inquiry from the outset, not one simply into the RCMP, so he should not try to buy us off with the claim that the government has done what we have requested.

Considering that on June 8 of last year the then solicitor general said that the government had started an investigation into the break-in in the fall of 1972 immediately it was brought to its attention, and considering that a few weeks later we had a report back to the House from the parliamentary secretary that that investigation had been completed, presumably to the satisfaction of the government, and, to cite one other instance involving political accountability, considering