

Committee on Defence Expenditure

that it is perfectly all right if rails belonging to the government are stolen, but that it may not be all right if they belong to the Canadian Pacific. That is exactly why I say that the time is overdue for the government to recognize the seriousness of the situation disclosed by this report, by the report of the Auditor General and by the known disappearance of camp equipment right across the country. The attitude of the government is that if it is stolen from the government it is a very different thing. According to the government, this is not a Canadian National siding, it is a government siding, so it is quite all right—help yourself.

Mr. Rowe: Selective theft.

Mr. Drew: This could be described as a selective theft. That has been the attitude of the government in regard to these matters. The story about the dam at Tucker creek is heart-warming to those who realize the piscatorial possibilities of the area immediately behind that dam. It really must conjure up in the minds of members who know a very dramatic picture of fire-fighting when they are told that the dam was built to fight fires out in that distant area so far from the place where the important buildings of the camp really are.

I submit that these are minor findings in this case, but the government has given them importance in an attempt to create the impression that the Currie report is not accurate in detail.

We are told that the government proposes to seek no scapegoats. What is it doing in attempting to create doubts about the reliability of the report made by the man whom they have described as the best qualified man in Canada for this task? If this government, with all its opportunities for propaganda outside of the house—paid for of course by the people of Canada—is going to follow a practice of this kind when it engages the services of a distinguished Canadian like Mr. Currie, then it is going to close the door to the services of a great many Canadians who know what may be in store for them if they state their frank opinion about what the government has done.

We are told that it is important to bring the report before the defence expenditure committee. We are told that it is important to submit these findings of facts to that committee. We are told that it is important to find out if these horses were actually on the payroll or if the information given the Prime Minister by Sergeant Young, who is now in penitentiary, is accurate information.

Mr. St. Laurent: On a question of privilege, I deny having received any information from

Sergeant Young or even knowing exactly where he is or how he got there, beyond what I have seen in the records of the department. The information I got was from the department and all the facts, except as to the division of the \$1.50 an hour, were taken from the departmental records. The information with respect to the division of the \$1.50 an hour was taken from a signed confession of Sergeant Young made before his conviction both to the officers of the provost corps and to the officers of the R.C.M.P.

Mr. Drew: That is the information which the Prime Minister referred to in the statement given in this house—

Mr. Fleming: Pages 892 and 893 of *Hansard*.

Mr. Drew:—and he told us then that he was waiting for the report of the statement by Sergeant Young.

Mr. St. Laurent: My hon. friend is quite mistaken there. I said I made a qualification when I gave the information to the house because there was some of the information that came from a statement made by Sergeant Young, but that was the statement made in the form of a written confession to the police.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker, since this has been raised, let me read exactly what the Prime Minister said. I am interested in the Prime Minister's remark that he did not know where Sergeant Young was. These are his words, as recorded at page 892 of *Hansard*:

I make this qualification because a part of the information is based on statements secured by the police from Sergeant Young who is now in the penitentiary and it is not possible to check all of them from official records.

Mr. Rowe: That is just what he said.

Mr. Drew: That is exactly what I said, that the Prime Minister was relying in part on information given by Sergeant Young, and the Prime Minister did know he was in the penitentiary.

Mr. St. Laurent: I know he is in a penitentiary. I do not know which penitentiary—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. St. Laurent:—and the statement—

Mr. Rowe: It does not matter much.

Mr. St. Laurent:—that I rose in my place to protest about implied that I had been in personal communication with Sergeant Young.

Mr. Rowe: It would not matter much which penitentiary he was in. He would be just as comfortable in one as in another.

Mr. St. Laurent: The record will show if that is the implication of the words I rose to protest against.