

Supply—Justice

The letter goes on to state:

If therefore you do carry out your intention to send out letters in the form of the one you have sent me, I can only suggest that you should send, in each case, a copy of this letter also. In that way, those who receive your letter will have all the facts.

I might add that they would not have nearly all the facts. Some of the letters I placed on the record earlier should also be known to the public. However, the gentleman in question did not let the matter drop at that point but appealed to the Prime Minister in reply to which he received a letter from the executive assistant and private secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. Guest, which caused me some added concern. The letter reads in part as follows:

Naturally, as a lawyer myself, it is embarrassing for me to see a colleague at the bar actively soliciting clientele in this manner,—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Regier: Yes, Mr. Chairman, Conservative members in this house who are barristers may applaud. They may think there is merit in that sentence. I say it is a despicable sentence and an intolerable thing that a citizen of Canada should be denied his rights as a citizen, whether or not he is a lawyer, to ask frankly and in a polite way over a period of years that he be restored to a position that he held under a previous government. The correspondence reveals that he was placed on the roster by the previous government not because he was a Liberal but because he was able to persuade the former minister of the equity of his claim. That is how he got on the roster at that time and was able to do some work for Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. However, Mr. Guest continues:

—but it may be that there is some special circumstance you do not disclose which excepts this situation from the usual ethical considerations governing practice.

Under ordinary circumstances, your letter would be forwarded to the Minister of Justice for his comments, but since you say that you have been finally informed by him that your name would not be recommended to the corporation as counsel, I presume there would be little purpose in such action on my part. If, however, you feel that this office or the Prime Minister could render you any ethical assistance in soliciting legal business, I would be very pleased to hear from you.

That is the crowning glory of all of this correspondence. Here is the Prime Minister's offer to assist this barrister to obtain a livelihood in an ethical fashion after the government of the day so unethically removed his name without cause. There is no indication of any complaint against the man in any of the correspondence. According to the correspondence he committed only one offence and that obviously was when he found himself

unable to endorse the election to this house of the hon. member for Lincoln. That is something I thought we were getting away from in Canada. I am very disappointed to see a British Columbia member of the cabinet involved in this kind of deal. I hope he will take steps to rectify the situation. I know that no minister can be informed of everything that transpires in his office. I can only express the hope and the wish that all of this has taken place without the knowledge of the minister and without his agreement and consent, and that this has all been done by one or more officials in his department, and that he will take early action.

The last letter I wish to refer to is dated February 24 last. It is a letter to Mr. Freeman from the minister, in which the minister says:

I really do not think that there is anything that I can add to what I said in my letter of February 12 in which I outlined the basis of selection of lawyers to represent the government of Canada and its agencies generally, in so far as my responsibility is concerned. I refer you particularly to the fifth paragraph of my letter of February 12, and to the last sentence of that paragraph.

In this letter the minister merely reminds the lawyer in St. Catharines of what he had said on an earlier occasion, and particularly the last paragraph and the last sentence which is as follows:

If, therefore, you do carry out your intention to send out letters in the form of the one you have sent me, I can only suggest that you should send, in each—

Mr. Fulton: My hon. friend is reading the wrong paragraph. The letter of February 24 reads:

I refer you particularly to the fifth paragraph of my letter of February 12, and to the last sentence of that paragraph.

The last sentence of that paragraph reads:

My recommendations are made from time to time on the basis of these assessments and you are quite in error in your conclusion that there is any other basis.

Mr. Regier: I wish to apologize to the minister. I have made some marks here and I was in the wrong paragraph. However, the minister again refers to his letter of February 12 and this letter in the main, Mr. Chairman, is a claim by the minister that he reviews these lists from time to time. I hope the minister can now disclose what is the basis of such review, whether or not political affiliations and history of crown attorneys are involved in this review, and how often he has made such a review since taking office.

As I indicated earlier, I hope the minister will agree that this situation ought to be remedied. I notice that my house leader had an order of the house passed on April 20 last, and at noon today a reply had not been received, the order of the house had not yet