

*Royal Canadian Mounted Police*

the Solicitor General in the House last year but also by the Prime Minister, that the matter was under investigation, that indeed there was no pattern of wrongdoing at that time. I recall that that is all that was asserted. From my point of view, in terms of political accountability that is all that has to be said at this point.

I suggest another question which has to be answered by this inquiry if it is to be of any use to the people of Canada is this: in 1972 did the then solicitor general have access to all the relevant facts? It is on record—and again I reluctantly bring out the contradictions—that the Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Goyer) said he was informed back in 1972. It is also on record through the words of the Solicitor General that the then commissioner of the RCMP and another senior official recalled—I forget the precise words but this is the logic and substance of the point—that they thought they normally would have verbally informed the minister. It seems to me that if the inquiry is to be useful it ought not to concentrate just on the RCMP in this instance but that the opportunity should be welcomed, I submit, by the government to clear up the contradictory implications of the statements which were made.

Similarly last year what kind of investigation was undertaken by the government? How much information was provided to the then solicitor general? How much information was provided to the Prime Minister? If, on the one hand, little information was provided to them, if they had just a superficial investigation, then they are politically accountable to this House for misleading the House and the country when they told us there had been a systematic and thorough investigation. That is what political accountability is all about, Mr. Speaker.

If, on the other hand, they were not informed by the RCMP last year, then it is important for us to ascertain the truth since questions are raised about the political accountability of the RCMP to the government. Either way, Mr. Speaker, we must examine the question. Either the government was deceptive and misled the people, or the government was not informed by the RCMP as it ought to have been. However, the terms of reference of this inquiry make it impossible for us to find the answer to that question.

Although in one sense we welcome the inquiry because it will examine some of the basic questions involved, as I said at the outset it will raise more questions than it will settle. What we have on the surface here is the government deciding to restrict narrowly the terms of reference to see whether there is systematic wrongdoing on the part of the RCMP. But the government has entirely left out very important and unresolved questions concerning political accountability on the part of the ministers themselves. Therefore from our point of view this is a very unacceptable inquiry.

As I have said, I take the view that the RCMP must be responsible to the cabinet of the day. In previous assertions in the House the Solicitor General, the Prime Minister, and others agreed with that. But they have also gone further. I am sure that if I checked back in *Hansard* I would find statements made by the Solicitor General and the Prime Minister in which they said that the political accountability point does

[Mr. Broadbent.]

concern them. If the political accountability point concerns them, why have they left it out of the terms of reference of this inquiry?

The implications are not pleasant, Mr. Speaker. The implications are that the government is either stupid or it has something to cover up.

**Some hon. Members:** Both.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Therefore I appeal to the government to reconsider immediately its terms of reference so as to include the very specific item of making it mandatory that this commission look into the political accountability question in general vis-à-vis the RCMP and the government, and specifically the political accountability that existed around the time of the 1972 break-in and that involved in the report back to the House in 1976 when the matter was seriously raised. Clearly, as it stands this commission is unacceptable.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse):** Mr. Speaker, I shall be brief since there is a debate going on in the House on national unity, but I must say how surprised I am to see that RCMP members are the subject of a royal commission of inquiry. In my childhood I had great admiration for this police force, we used to call it the mounted police, it was more imposing, very impressive for us little boys, and I still admire it. But for the last three weeks, I have been greatly surprised to hear that RCMP members have committed unlawful acts. I appreciate they are human beings. I also appreciate they are under all kinds of pressures, but if we have come to the point where we cannot rely on our police forces to take care of our security, where their investigations are shady, I am wondering where we are all going?

In the beginning we were told that it was merely an illegal break-in on the premises of the APLQ. I do not know when we were told the truth, but at that time we were told: It happened only once; there is nothing wrong with overlooking it, just this once. But now, we are told that it happened in other circumstances. Other circumstances means several times: perhaps twice, perhaps five times, or ten times. Perhaps even 25 times. No one knows. In any event, there are surely victims when illegal raids take place. The law is not being respected, in addition to which the public is not being given the protection it is entitled to. I am absolutely amazed to see that in the minister's statement. It is written that allegations have recently been made to the effect that certain persons, then members of the RCMP, were implicated, in other circumstances, in procedures of inquiry or other acts that are not authorized by law.

There must be some code or other to guide police agents who are not dumbbells. They can read and understand the rules and instructions they are given. So, those people act according to their whims. In any event, Mr. Speaker, the statement says in part: Whereas public support of the RCMP in the discharge of its responsibility to protect the security of