

Supply—Justice

Mr. Trudeau: I thank the hon. member for his courtesy, but I can hardly reply in three minutes.

Mr. Fairweather: May I ask him one question, then? He and I have been carrying on an exchange about an individual by the name of Edward Somers. I know the matter has received a great deal of attention. I know the minister's great interest in civil rights. I know that Mr. Somers has made some sort of complaint to the Governor General of Canada, the Prime Minister of Canada, the commission for the administration of justice in Quebec, to the minister and others. I consider myself in distinguished company. Can the minister assure me that the files in this case, which involve a bankruptcy some years ago, will receive very careful consideration by the minister or departmental officials?

Mr. Trudeau: It is hardly fair, Mr. Chairman, to try to deal with all these questions and complaints in the time left. With regard to the last one, I can only say extremely briefly that these files have received that attention. Basically, the question boils down to where the administration of justice lies and where the redress can be obtained, at the federal level or at the provincial level. I would welcome a chance to discuss this at greater length at some other time.

For the time being, I can only try to touch on the very broad subjects that have been broached tonight. I want to thank hon. members for the level at which they have placed this debate. We have gone all the way from the philosophy of law and the sociology of law to concrete proposals for law reform. I must congratulate hon. members for their very constructive proposals. With regard to a great number of them, I should say they will find we have anticipated their desires. They will find that in the omnibus Criminal Code bill, which runs some 50 printed pages in length and which I understand will be brought before the house very soon, many of the points which they have raised have been settled. I would only add that we are, in the Department of Justice, insisting very strongly on the function of law reform which is one of the fundamental tasks of the Department of Justice. This subject of law reform will be applied not only to the criminal law but to many other areas.

A lot of the complaints which were made in the house tonight, as hon. members recognize, had to do with the administration of justice and cannot be solved by action at the federal level alone. Many of the complaints

centred around unequal justice to the rich and the poor, and in this respect not only is there a problem of provincial jurisdiction, but I should add that under the type of constitutional bill of rights which we intend to discuss with the provinces, the question of access to counsel is one with which we hope to deal.

I see the clock is moving fast, and this brings me to the whole constitutional question. I am sorry that at this time I will not be able to reply to the remarks made. I must point out to members that I spoke at some length on the constitution before the standing committee in the month of June. The answers to many of the questions asked by the hon. member for Greenwood will be found there. Let me just say that he, and many other people inside and outside of this house, are labouring under a very grave misconception. Perhaps the fault is mine for not having explained frequently enough what we intend by this bill of rights.

Mr. Bell (Carleton): Ten o'clock.

Mr. Trudeau: This is the rule of the game, I suppose.

An hon. Member: You made the rules.

The Chairman: It being ten o'clock, it is my duty, pursuant to the provisions of special orders adopted April 26 and June 26, to forthwith put every question, without amendment or debate, necessary to dispose of the main and supplementary estimates now before the committee of supply. Accordingly, the Chair proposes to continue with the department now being considered and proceed in alphabetical order through those departments remaining.

Mr. Bell (Carleton): May I suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, it is ten o'clock and the rules do not provide for the continuance of this house after ten o'clock? I am submitting to you that the provisions of standing order 6 are mandatory that the house shall rise at ten o'clock. There are no exceptions made in relation to it by any special order and without a special order, the house cannot continue to sit. The special order of April 26, in paragraph 5(c) simply gives the number of days which may be allocated to the business of supply during the session. It does not, in any sense at all, abrogate the order dealing with the hour of adjournment.

This becomes quite clear, sir, when you consider the special order of June 26. This special order of June 26, which has no