

Indian Affairs

Mr. Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, similar allegations have been reported in the media. The point I am making is that there are allegations of wrongdoing against the Clerk of the Privy Council, who was a Deputy Minister at the time, against certain Canadians, and against the Westbank Indian Band. It seems to me that if the Hon. Member has evidence to substantiate any allegations he might have, it is incumbent upon him, indeed it is his duty as a Canadian and a Member of Parliament, to provide whatever evidence he has to the police and have the police, the RCMP in this case, investigate.

For the Member to stand up in committee and stand up in the House of Commons and make allegations in the middle of a lawsuit, when he is named as the defendant, is an outrageous abuse of his privileges in this House and it brings the whole House of Commons into disrepute.

The Government has been in office for two years. His colleague, a Minister of the Crown, has had this in his Department. The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Crombie), the Solicitor General (Mr. Beatty), the Minister of Justice and indeed the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Mulroney) know that these allegations are made by a member of their own caucus, but they are not providing that information to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or appointing a judicial inquiry. I suggest that it is an obstruction of justice. The matter should have gone to the RCMP as soon as it was brought to the Hon. Member's attention.

I regret that the Conservative Party has found it necessary to do what it has done here this afternoon, rather than act accordingly and adhere to some very basic principles of decency and justice.

Mr. Greenaway: What did John Turner do when he was Minister?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question? The Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell (Mr. Boudria).

Mr. Lewis: Rat Pack number two.

Mr. Greenaway: Rat number two. Where is Cops? All the others are there.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I hear some noise from across the way as I begin to make a few remarks on this topic. As much as I try to ignore that, as I know you would want me to do, Mr. Speaker, I cannot help but think about all those remarks that Conservative Members—

Mr. Oberle: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Is it not customary for the Chair to recognize members from different Parties?

Mr. Nunziata: You never stood up.

Mr. Oberle: I noticed my colleague behind me standing up for debate. I thought that he would have been recognized.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I will recognize him after the Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. There are only 10 minute speeches allowed. I regret that I did not see the Hon. Member rise, but I will recognize him next.

Mr. Boudria: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I first congratulate you for that excellent ruling on that point of order. I cannot help but remind myself of those very eloquent replies which the Solicitor General (Mr. Beatty) gave to opposition Members of the House on occasion after they had made allegations which were perhaps one hundredth as severe as those we have heard this afternoon.

I recall asking questions that did not involve judging a case, asking the Solicitor General to adjudicate on matters before the court, but simply asking him whether, for instance, a search warrant had been issued for an office of a Member of Parliament. I did not even ask whether that had been exercised because I know it falls under the authority of the Speaker. Yet, even asking those questions, the Solicitor General replied that if I had allegations of criminal activity to report, I should do so to the police.

Recently I reported to the House an allegation made in a Montreal newspaper concerning certain tendering practices of a Government Department. I was merely asking the Government to investigate this, but I was told again that if I knew of certain criminal activities it was my duty to report them to the RCMP. Those comments were made by Conservative cabinet Ministers in reply to published allegations in the newspaper that we were merely asking them to investigate. We were not making those allegations.

I can only assume that the Member who is making these allegations today must have been aware of how the Solicitor General, the chief law officer of the Crown in this country, expects Members of Parliament to raise similar issues. If he is aware of that, does he simply have confidence in his own colleagues or does he have a total lack of respect for our institutions? I do not know which of the two it is.

● (1630)

There are two issues before us today. There is the issue, of course, of whether or not the documents, as the Hon. Member has asked, should be tabled in this House. That is obviously what the whole motion is about. But I contend that that is not what the speech of the Hon. Member was about. One could stand here all day and ask the Government to table a document. So the Hon. Member from Cariboo—Chilcotin (Mr. Greenaway) rises in his place in order to ask that certain documents be tabled not just of anyone but of one of his own colleagues. All he had to do was to turn sideways and speak to his colleague, the Parliamentary Secretary, from a few feet away, and ask him whether or not he intended to table the documents. The charade was allowed to go on in this House, as my distinguished colleague, the Hon. Member for York South—Weston (Mr. Nunziata), pointed out, whereby an Hon. Member who knew, or at least should have known, that the documents in question were going to be tabled anyway, used the pretext of presenting this motion in the House to make accusations. We have to collectively assume at this point that all these accusations are wrong because the laws of this land do not permit us to think otherwise. I do not pretend to be learned in the law.