

*Supply—Justice*

authorities. In saying that I must also say at once that I do not, of course, intend to suggest that the allegations are well founded. That question could only be established on the basis of such an inquiry. I have already referred this matter to the provincial authorities by whom, I understand, it has been investigated. I should like to say to the hon. member just this: I will, of course, gladly bring to the attention of the attorney general of Quebec the further remarks that he has made on this subject with the request that they be carefully considered and the matter again carefully investigated.

**Mr. Regier:** Mr. Chairman, there is a matter which has caused me considerable concern over many long years, and that relates to the minister's statement that we have a different system from that which prevails in the United Kingdom and that the result, in effect—and I do not want to misinterpret what the hon. gentleman said—is that this question must rest with the provincial authority.

I fail to see how we can even begin to think of a bill of rights for Canadians while we are content to have the administration of the rights of Canadians rest with the provincial authorities. I fail to see how we can even begin to advocate the introduction of a bill of rights for Canadians as Canadians and yet continue this old and outmoded idea that our rights as Canadians should be forever subject to interpretations which may be decided upon by ten different attorneys general in ten different Canadian provinces.

I feel that this is the position which has to be faced by the Canadian people. I say that either we have rights as Canadians or we do not have rights as Canadians, and if we do not have rights as Canadians we might as well be known as Newfoundlanders or Manitobans or British Columbians or anything else. I feel that the minister is leaning over backwards as have all other ministers in insisting on the prerogatives in the provincial attorneys general to enforce the rights of Canadians as Canadians.

I wish now to return to the debate that occurred in this chamber before the dinner hour. During the dinner recess I had occasion to read some correspondence and I am unable to reveal it because I have not permission to do so as I had with respect to other correspondence to which I referred. I have received correspondence from attorneys of the city of Ottawa who are complaining about there being a select list of well-known supporters of the Conservative party whose names are placed on a list for legal work for Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation or attorneys who may not be well-known as Conservatives but who are

[Mr. Fulton.]

partners in legal firms who have been known to make a donation to the Conservative election fund and thus have been placed on the preferred list while Liberal and attorneys of other political faith have been removed from that list.

The minister indicated before the dinner hour that there is no such list. He made that statement despite a letter I read into the record earlier in the day in which it was said that Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation is bound to engage attorneys who are on a list supplied by the minister's department. The minister has not yet satisfied us as to whether or not there is a list and concerning who is responsible for that list. The minister indicated a certain measure of responsibility but at the same time contradicted himself when he said there was no list. The committee is entitled to receive an adequate explanation as to whether there is a list, when it was last revised, who was advised of the revision of the list and why that revised list was not disclosed to the House of Commons in response to an order of the house dated in April that any such lists be disclosed. The order was passed in April and it is now June. There was ample time to disclose the list.

I know I have heard a lot of appeals to professional dignity but may I say it is my conviction that within the ranks of the Tories there is no such thing as professional dignity. There is purely political patronage and professional dignity has to take a secondary role.

**Mr. Ricard:** Stop crying and shut up.

**Mr. Regier:** I regret that a minister from British Columbia would associate himself for one moment with a matter of this kind. I expected that he would denounce this practice but he did not. He simply sought to get out from under by casting slurs at one attorney in the province of Ontario who had the guts and initiative to defend his rights as a Canadian citizen.

**Some hon. Members:** Sit down.

**Mr. Regier:** All this attorney was asking for was that he be placed on the eligible list and if he could not be placed on the eligible list all he asked was that he be informed as to why he was removed from the eligible list of attorneys who are able to act on behalf of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

**An hon. Member:** Go back to the garbage.

**Mr. Spencer:** Mr. Chairman, would the hon. member permit a question? I am quite interested in the subject matter that he has raised and I should like to ask him a question in order to clarify this subject. Inasmuch as he appears to be giving to the committee