

Interim Supply

Mr. Low: From what has happened here this week one gathers that the whole issue was that we could not trust the people in the United States to make the wisest use of information which we supply to them and if you talk to people anywhere on the streets today that is exactly the thing they will quote back to you. Whether it is right or wrong that is the attitude of the people, the impression they gathered.

I think we ought to get the matter straight. What is the issue which we are trying to discuss here? Is the issue whether or not Canada should furnish information on a confidential basis to the security people in the United States or are we trying to get cleared away the facts of the case in connection with the person who was accused—no, I will not say accused because I do not think he was—but the person concerning whom information came up in the investigations of the subcommittee of the United States senate?

Let me point out that in reading George Bain's article in the *Globe and Mail* one cannot come to any other conclusion than that the government failed dismally right from 1951 to get this thing cleared away as it ought to have been. I think if Mr. Norman was hounded to his death, as a good many people seem to think he was—I have kept quiet about it because I did not know enough about the case to say anything but I have been listening very carefully and I have watched public reaction—then this government and the officials of the Department of External Affairs must bear a large part of the blame.

Now wait just a moment; it is all right for the Secretary of State for External Affairs to just shrug that off—

Mr. Pearson: I am not shrugging it off.

Mr. Low: You had a perfect opportunity to clear this whole thing away since 1951 and to say to the Canadian people whether he was or was not associated with communism.

Mr. Pearson: I said he was a loyal Canadian.

Mr. Low: The first time we have heard a word about this subject from the lips of the minister was today.

Mr. Pearson: That is not true.

Mr. Dickey: Where have you been?

Mr. Low: The first time he mentioned it was today and if I remember correctly he said that in his early years Mr. Norman had associations with communists. That is exactly what the subcommittee in the United States took as evidence from somebody.

Mr. Martin: No, no, they went much further.
[Mr. Martin.]

Mr. Low: I happen to have a copy of the evidence in front of me which I have just been reading.

An hon. Member: This is just another attempt to smear.

Mr. Low: I am not attempting to smear at all. What I am attempting to understand is why the minister and his associates allowed this thing to drag on from 1951 without coming clean and making it clear that this man had been cleared.

Mr. Pearson: We said that in 1951; twice, formally.

Mr. Low: I know you did.

Mr. Pearson: Well, what do you want us to do?

Mr. Low: But today the minister is letting us know something that he has withheld ever since 1951.

Mr. Pearson: We said he was a loyal citizen.

Mr. Low: That is right, the minister very reluctantly let that out today and perhaps, as the Leader of the Opposition said, he said too much. The point is that the minister did say today that it was discovered in 1951 that in Mr. Norman's early years he had had certain associations with communists, but that had all been cleared away. What I am interested in finding out is this: What was the security check that was held in 1951? I have understood from the minister's statements that there was a double check; by whom was that double check made?

Mr. Pearson: By the R.C.M.P.

Mr. Low: By the R.C.M.P. security people; were they the ones who gave him the clearance in 1951?

Mr. Pearson: The R.C.M.P. did the checking.

Mr. Low: That is fine; the R.C.M.P. may have done the checking but after the checking was done by the R.C.M.P. security people who gave Mr. Norman the clearance?

Mr. Pearson: On the basis of the R.C.M.P. check Mr. Norman was given a complete clearance.

Mr. Low: By whom?

Mr. Pearson: By the government.

Mr. Low: Then apparently it was not the security people of the R.C.M.P. who cleared him at all, if it was on the basis the minister says.

Mr. Pearson: It was on the basis of the R.C.M.P. check that the government—