

Expropriation

practice are pretty well the same kind of rules that have been operative in England for the last 100 years.

I do not wish to leave the wrong impression. In our Alberta and Saskatchewan courts, we have rules based on the rules of perhaps 100 years ago. But there has been a tendency in these courts to streamline the procedure.

In respect of divorces, for example, there is a backlog in most provinces because of the shortage of judges. I wish they would be appointed. In Alberta, if there is a lawyer on the other side, you can start the action on a Monday and be on for trial by Friday. However, in some of the provinces in the urban centres—and this is no criticism of the judges or lawyers—one sometimes has to wait as long as nine months. This is the reason I support the amendment. We must streamline our rules. Recently, I read an article by a well-known member of the Canadian Bar who said that if anything is backward it is the procedures of our courts and they must be streamlined because we have been living in the past. As I say, in my own province we are streamlining the courts and getting things done. I think we should be streamlining all our courts and getting on with the business of the nation.

• (3:50 p.m.)

We could pass as many bills as we like here, but the test comes when we get down to the application. I said in the committee:

I would like to see the rules of the Exchequer Court brought before this Committee as well as the rules with reference to the Supreme Court trial division of the provinces of Ontario and Alberta and I think he would find that the rules of Alberta and the rules of Ontario are almost identical. I think he also would find that the rules of the Exchequer Court are more in line with the English practice—

I am not being critical; I am just being practical and telling the House what the facts are. I went on to say:

—which in Britain may be applicable to a place the size of Great Britain, but certainly work hardships as far as the individuals are concerned who have very little money in which to go before the Exchequer Court when their land is expropriated.

That is my position, but if the minister assures this committee that they are going to reform this court so it will serve the average Canadian, then I think I will have succeeded in getting something across—

As the minister promised the committee there would be, there has been a tremendous improvement recently in court procedures. So, the battle has not been totally lost.

[Mr. Woolliams.]

I want to read to the House what the minister said in answer to my comment, and this is where the credibility gap occurs. I have brought my documentation to the House this afternoon. I did not take it to the committee.

Mr. Blair: You had it in the committee.

Mr. Woolliams: I did not bring it forward in the committee. I intended to have it filed, but I did not.

Mr. Blair: You read it for 30 minutes.

Mr. Woolliams: I can read what my good friend said a few minutes from now, but I will not digress to bother with him. If he is not interested in justice for the average man, if he is more interested in representing big corporations here in Ottawa and across the country, let him speak for the rich. I am here to speak for the average man.

Mr. Blair: Well, well, well. Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege simply because people reading *Hansard* would not realize the jocular manner in which my hon. friend spoke. I think that my hon. friend, knowing the profession and knowing the rules of this House, would not wish to cast personal reflection on anyone else.

Mr. Woolliams: I am not making any personal reflections, but if my hon. friend would just listen and, if he has an argument, would come forward with his argument, that would be better. If he is representing the poor, let him say so.

Mr. MacEwan: If the hat fits, wear it.

Mr. Woolliams: I would not say that, but I did notice a little sensitivity there.

Just as the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Munro) said last night on television, the poorest people are to be found in the ghettos in Canada, and all they get is of poor quality; those people even get the poorest lawyers. That may be true. That is what I am trying to say here. I know the minister feels that way himself. He does not have an easy job, and I know his problems. I am certainly by no means being critical of him.

The minister said in the committee:

I cannot let some of these allegations against the Exchequer Court stand. I would be willing to file the schedule of fees and costs before the Exchequer Court—

I have them here and I am willing to file the schedule of fees and costs before the