

Administration of Justice

The members of the Ralliement Cr ditiste and of the Social Credit party are asking the house to concern itself with the nation's business. Well, I want them to know that we think exactly the same thing. They have but one thing to do and that is to ask the Minister of Justice to make charges here in the house.

We do not want the charges to be levelled by proxy, through the press, but right here in the house because, for my part, I do not wish to sit in this house with anybody who might be a security risk. If there is such a person in the house, let the minister name him. After that, the other members and himself will be able to continue sitting here.

For years, the hon. members opposite and especially those from the province of Quebec have been accusing the Conservative party of scandal-mongering. Well, I ask them now, who is looking for scandal? We are trying by every possible means to find out if a scandal exists, and you do not even have the courage to rise and make charges.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if the Liberal party thinks this is the way to enhance the prestige of the province of Quebec in this country, they are mistaken. We, from the province of Quebec, have been accused throughout the nation for too long. Today we see before us a minister from our province who lacks the courage to stand up and make charges.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is high time that we put an end to this business. I beg the Minister of Justice to deal with this question once and for all by rising in this house and making direct charges instead of making allegations or other statements through the medium of the press.

• (5:30 p.m.)

[English]

An hon. Member: Six o'clock.

Mr. Knowles: Six o'clock; Come, come.

Mr. Speaker: Order; I should like to submit again to the consideration of hon. members that we might call it six o'clock if there is unanimous agreement.

Mr. Nielsen: We are quite prepared to call it six o'clock provided the question of privilege will not be prejudiced in its place on Monday.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member knows that the Chair can give no such assurance. It would be normal that this would be the

[Mr. Keays.]

procedure. But I do not think I should be required to give an assurance of any kind to the hon. member for Yukon.

Mr. Ian Wahn (St. Paul's): For two days, I and a number of other members have sat here quietly with mounting confusion and indignation about what has been going on here. For two days, attacks have been launched on the Minister of Justice for remarks he made outside the house at a press conference as well as inside the house. I should like to remind hon. members opposite that remarks made by the Minister of Justice outside the house are not privileged, and those who feel themselves damaged or injured by them have a perfect right to take the appropriate action in the courts. This course is open to them if they feel they have been slandered.

I appreciate that this is a serious matter and that in addition to this right in the courts they have the right to take appropriate action in this house. The fact remains that they do not want to take appropriate action.

Yesterday, three motions were presented, all obviously bad, and held to be bad by the Chair. I have a great respect for the knowledge of the rules possessed by some hon. members on the other side of the house. I am confident that some of them know full well what is the appropriate motion to put if they feel they have been libelled by the Minister of Justice. If hon. members opposite feel they have been libelled, let them put that motion and vote on it. If not, let them keep quiet.

An hon. Member: What motion?

Mr. Wahn: Turning for a moment to the remarks made by the minister in the house with regard to the Leader of the Opposition, let me say they were most specific. There can be no criticism of his remarks on that score. They were very much to the point. If they offend the privileges of this house, let a motion be made. All day we have sat here. The Chair has invited members of the opposition on a number of occasions to bring forward the appropriate motion. Not one of them has sought to do so. Yet, they cannot say they do not know what the proper motion would be.

Mr. Churchill: Would the hon. member permit a question? Is the hon. member of the opinion that there has been no breach of the rights and privileges of members of this house? What is his answer to that?