

Opposition that there is no agency of government—no agency of government anywhere, whether it is the National Capital Commission or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police—that is not ultimately answerable to the civil authority in this country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): In matters of security, when matters are given to a government, discretion is given to a government with respect to security, the people of the country and the parliament of the country entrust that government with the greatest responsibility that it can place upon a government. That responsibility and its operation will go unquestioned by parliament and by the people of Canada until something occurs which indicates that that trust has either been set aside or ignored, or has been betrayed—one or the other. Then certain questions arise, and that has been the purpose of the questions, the emergency debate, over how this government—I repeat, this government, sir—discharged its trusteeship for the security and intelligence protection of this country. That is the question.

Now, sir, the Prime Minister asks, as he puts it, what would we want to have done about it? I am going to say categorically that I do not want done about it what was done before. Mr. Speaker, I see you rising. I think it is important, since the Prime Minister has asked what our views are, that he should have our views.

Mr. Speaker: That may be so. However, I have allowed the hon. member some latitude already in establishing an answer to that question. The matter that is at issue is a question of privilege, and it has been contributed to rather substantially by both sides. I should like to hear the hon. member's argument in respect of the merits of the question of privilege.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I am trying to do so. I apologize to your Honour if I offend your sensibilities with respect to what ought to be heard in this House. There has been a very serious accusation made involving security; an allegation made by the Prime Minister that the hon. member for Central Nova has accused the security forces of this House of something. If, in reply to that, reserving the right of the hon. member for Central Nova when he comes, I cannot in the course of it deal with the questions raised by the Prime Minister, then I think I am not being allowed—and I say this with great respect—to express the view that I think is important and involves the security service.

I have indicated to you, sir, what I feel is the responsibility of the elected civic authority and the position of every other agency of government. Now, sir, with respect to what we do in the future here, surely we cannot have a repetition of that. Surely we cannot have a repetition of the position where the government of the day says that in the first place it turned its back on any service and allowed it to operate. We cannot have that; or, after the guidelines of 1975 were issued to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, after those guidelines were given to the security service of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police,

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they then turned their backs on the operation of that security and intelligence service. We just cannot have that.

If the Prime Minister wants to be constructive, two things will have to happen here with respect to the motion that is before Your Honour. The first thing is that Your Honour will have to decide the question of privilege on the accusation made by the Prime Minister, certainly, and I put it to you that there is a prima facie case for that. The second thing that will have to happen when that matter goes to the committee, when the motion which I hope Your Honour will find that the hon. member for Peace River can make with respect to the matter, goes to the committee of this House, that committee will have the opportunity—and I hope it will take the opportunity—to examine the whole question of parliamentary control and government control over the security services of this country. If that is the outcome of such an investigation, then this last week will have been worth while.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): But if the outcome is a continual refusal to answer questions in this House, which the government has every right to do, and if the outcome is to rely on a commission of inquiry which may not be reporting for years, then the people of Canada and this House have no guarantee that the same slipshod exercise of the civil authority that is vested in this government will not continue. That is the point, sir, and on that point I think the motion by the hon. member for Peace River will provide an admirable opportunity for the House to get to the heart of this problem immediately.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Norman A. Cafik (Minister of State (Multiculturalism)): Mr. Speaker, I am not going to prolong this debate, but I have a couple of points to make with respect to the question of privilege. It seems to me to be quite clear that the opposition is trying to have it both ways. When the government says something with respect to the opposition, they seem to take great exception, but as the Prime Minister pointed out in his remarks, they seem to want to have a free wheel to say anything, regardless of how irresponsible it may be. I know the Prime Minister offered a couple of quotations from the record of *Hansard*. I will only deal with two. They seem to be very, very specific. As reported at page 493 of *Hansard*, the hon. member for St. John's West said:

I say that the government was manipulating the RCMP, because I have heard nothing to persuade me otherwise.

That seems to imply not only a direct charge but, as well, justification for the charge. It seems to me that the opposition seem to believe that providing they have not heard anything to the contrary, they are entitled to say whatever they want in the House of Commons.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Cafik: I do not think they ought to be entitled to make that kind of irresponsible and scandalous statement.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!