

Mr. Forke. I wrote him a letter to the effect that the bearer of the letter was paying a visit to Ottawa where he was desirous of meeting some of the Ministers and that if Mr. Forke could afford him the opportunity of an interview, he would appreciate it. He came to Ottawa and I met him some few weeks later—in February, 1927—and I asked him if he had been to Ottawa and he told me yes, he had. I asked him if he had seen Mr. Forke and he told me yes, he had, but that he could do nothing with him. I asked him what that statement meant and he told me that he was down for a bunch of immigration permits which meant a great deal to some of the boys. Now, gentlemen of the Committee, I can assure you of this, that no letter of mine to the Minister was intended to have been used for the purpose of securing permits. I felt very keenly about it; it worried me a great deal. It so happened that a few days later it was intimated that I had been appointed as one of the three delegates from Saskatchewan to the National Committee for the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of Canada, and, therefore, knowing that I was coming to Ottawa, I decided to straighten this matter out with Mr. Forke. The discussion of this question arose out of my going to Mr. Forke's office and mentioning this particular incident, which Mr. Forke recollected. In that connection Mr. Forke explained to me why he did not sign those permits. The conversation, may I say, was not confidential; it was a conversation dealing with a matter in which I regarded myself as being very vitally interested, a matter indeed, Mr. Chairman, in connection with which I felt that my own honour and reputation was more or less at stake. As I say, I saw Mr. Forke and he told me why these had not been signed—

Hon. Mr. RALSTON: Let me interrupt right here to say that I, at least, as a member of this Committee, reserve to myself the right to decide whether this conversation was confidential, personal or not.

The WITNESS: Yes sir. But I think I have the right to make that statement.

Hon. Mr. RALSTON: I have now my own conception of the matter, that it was a personal letter by you introducing a friend, and you are now trying to explain a matter of personal honour.

The WITNESS: This conversation arose in that way. Mr. Forke told me he had done his level best to stop the issuance of these permits; he further told me they had been abused. I believed him. He said that large numbers of them had been issued previously and that the records of the Department would bear that out or deny it. He gave me an incident which led me to believe that such was the case.

Mr. CAHAN: State the incident.

The WITNESS: State the incident, sir?

Mr. CAHAN: Yes.

The WITNESS: He told me that soon after he became Minister of Immigration a man whom I understood to be a defeated member of the House came to Mr. Forke with a bunch of permits to be signed. Mr. Forke said—I remember his words distinctly—that such a request aroused his Scotch temper and he refused. On another occasion Mr. Forke mentioned to me a member who had received a large number of these permits and, as in the former instance,—oh, perhaps I should say this, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Forke in the conversation previously, as I have to state that incident, had said that when his Scotch temper was aroused he asked this man what these permits were worth to him, and the man told him they were worth \$100 each and he had his election expenses to pay.

[Mr. M. J. Coldwell.]