

appeal on behalf of a young officer of good family and good record—and this is substantiated by a number of officers who have since retired from the force. I ask that this gentleman be granted plain justice in this instance, because I feel that he has been grossly discriminated against and victimized by the very men whose conduct is in question. I hope I shall have a statement from the minister in this regard.

Mr. BENNETT: Not only do the conditions exist in Quebec, as indicated by the hon. member who has just spoken (Mr. MacNeil), so far as that particular regiment is concerned, but I have had occasion to bring to the attention of the minister other cases in which men have been punished, it seems to me, simply because they dared to assert themselves in favour of honest and decent administration in the units with which they are connected. I am bound to say that I think the minister in the two cases I brought to his attention has endeavoured to do everything that a minister reasonably can do, but the officers will not give effect to what should be done and it is disturbing to think that this is going on. It happened in years gone by in this country and created considerable difficulty.

There never has been a time when there was in connection with the militia a situation such as we have to-day, and it is attributable to exactly such conditions as the hon. member has just referred to. It is believed that there is direct interference on the part of some officials with respect to what should be the orderly administration of a department, and I can only say to the minister that I believe—I want to be fair about it—that though he is a strong partisan he has been endeavouring to do something to remove the difficulty that exists. I would say to him something of the sort once said by a queen to her son—“Charles, be king!” I suggest to the minister that, after all, he is minister, and not somebody else in his department, and that the conditions that exist in Quebec call for a real investigation. In connection with the Royal 22nd Regiment they cry aloud for an investigation. The man who has been promoted—the story will be told to this house some day—I will not mention by name. I say that purposely, for it would not be the proper thing in view of what the minister is trying to do. At Winnipeg the condition got down to this: Is it possible because of social and other pull for any man to misappropriate money and then, because decent, honest men wish to see that sort of thing stopped, they should be punished and deprived of their positions

[Mr. Cardin.]

and treated in this way? That is what it gets down to. I will refrain at this time of day from going into the details of all this, because I have found the minister himself reasonable in his attitude of mind and in his approach to these problems. But for some strange reason action always falls just short of realization. I wrote and told the minister that I thought he had done the fair and decent thing but to my horror I discovered that after all, although he thought it had been done, it had not. That sort of thing must stop in this country. No little band in this country is going to defy either ministers or public opinion in the observance of the amenities of life, merely because they happen to be the favourites of particular individuals. The sooner that is understood, the better.

With respect to the matter to which the hon. member for Vancouver North has referred. I intended myself to speak about it, but I am not going to do so now. We have a right to these papers—and when I say “we” I mean this house. No sort of private star chamber business is going to be set up here; if I were to adopt the language of the Prime Minister with respect to a somewhat similar matter I would characterize it even more strongly, but I content myself with these observations. I still rely upon the minister carrying into effect what I believe he honestly wants to do in the interests of the service of this country, and I say to him again, in the language of the old queen, “Ian, be king!”

Hon. IAN MACKENZIE (Minister of National Defence): First I desire to thank my right hon. friend (Mr. Bennett) for his very fair comments.

Two cases mentioned, the one by my right hon. friend and the other by the hon. member for Vancouver North (Mr. MacNeil) arose before I was entrusted with the responsibility of being Minister of National Defence.

Mr. BENNETT: That is true.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): With respect to the Winnipeg case, I am not going to discuss the right or wrong of it, but I have endeavoured to the best of my ability to see that substantial justice was done.

Mr. BENNETT: Hear, hear.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): Two different courts of inquiry were held in that case, and I trust that even further measures will be taken to see that final justice is rendered in every individual case in connection with the Winnipeg incident.