

available before a royal commission, or elsewhere, suggesting that a minister of the Crown was giving inaccurate or false information, for whatever reason, to the House of Commons, the House of Commons must be barred during the existence of the royal commission from finding out the true facts of the case. My question to the Prime Minister is this: Is it the policy of the government that in the event of a contradiction between what a minister of the Crown tells the House of Commons, and evidence before a royal commission, the government, as a matter of policy, will not itself seek out the true facts and make those true facts known to the House of Commons immediately, so that hon. members may know whether or not they can trust the government?

Mr. Trudeau: I have in no way said the opposition would be barred from forming its judgment as to which of the witnesses would be credible. I have made it clear that, as far as I am concerned, I stand by the word of the minister. If the opposition, or a royal commission, judge that another witness is more credible and that, indeed, he contradicts the minister, it will become known. I am not suggesting the opposition should not make up its own mind. Indeed, it obviously has made up its own mind: The government is always wrong and the opposition is always right.

But I repeat, Mr. Speaker: What does the government, or the opposition, do when the commissioner says one thing and a police officer says the contrary? Is the opposition suggesting we should chastise or discipline the commissioner or the police officer? Or is the Leader of the Opposition suggesting, as we do, that the government should wait for the commission to tell us who is credible and who is not?

Mr. Clark: The opposition is saying that when there are facts which are relevant to the role of ministers in the House of Commons, when there are facts which parliament and the people should know, those facts should be made available to the House of Commons. We are not talking, now, about differences in judgment. We are talking about differences in fact. I refer to differences in fact between evidence adduced before a royal commission of inquiry and statements made in the House of Commons.

The government knows these facts or, because it is an employer of public servants, it has the means to find these facts. In face of the kind of contradiction in evidence to which I have referred, will it be the policy of the government to go after those facts right away and publish them for the benefit of the House of Commons, or will it be the policy of the government to hide them until the royal commission has reported?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the government has gone after these facts. It has not hidden them. It has made its own inquiry. It has made its own inquiry into this particular set of facts, and the former solicitor general, the Minister of Supply and Services, in a statement to this House on this particular set of facts said he had not been informed of the APLQ break-in. He also said, if my memory is correct, that the commissioner of the RCMP at that time, Mr. Higgitt, said he

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could not remember having told him of this break-in. These are the facts. We looked into them, and on the basis of those facts the former solicitor general raised the matter in this House as a question of privilege and made his position clear.

The former solicitor general will obviously be called upon to testify before the McDonald royal commission. He will be asked these questions. I am reasonably certain he will say to the royal commission what he has said to the House of Commons, that he had not been informed of the break-in of the APLQ by the RCMP. We shall, therefore, be placed in the position of having the former solicitor general say he was not informed, and the former commissioner saying either that he did not remember or that he thought he might have told him. What is the government to do? I suggest our duty, and the duty of the Leader of the Opposition, is to allow these facts to be adjudicated upon by the McDonald royal commission.

Mr. Clark: One final question, for the sake of clarification. Is the Prime Minister now telling us that he, himself, after investigating all these matters, accepts and supports the statements of the former solicitor general?

Mr. Trudeau: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

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PRIVILEGE

MR. NIELSEN—ANSWER GIVEN BY PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I am sorry the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has left the chamber, because it involves him. A moment ago the right hon. gentleman made a statement which disclosed information concerning certain discussions which took place during an in camera session of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, I sat in on those discussions. The Prime Minister informed the House a few moments ago that 30 pages of testimony, to which reference has been made, were somehow made known to members attending that in-camera session.

While members who attend in camera sessions of standing committees do not take any oath of secrecy, they are upon their honour not to discuss any of the proceedings with anyone. The Prime Minister has disclosed information with respect to proceedings which he thinks took place in an in-camera session. As one who sat in on those sessions I feel compelled, without disclosing what did take place, to refute the Prime Minister's assertion that those 30 pages of testimony were discussed or produced in any way. I believe my colleagues who sat in with me on those sessions will bear me out in this.

Mr. Speaker: I will examine what was said to determine whether any reference to the meetings of that committee shows evidence of there having been a breach of privilege.