

Administration of Justice

Mr. Lambert: He has not got names. He says he has not seen the file. There is not even a file that the Prime Minister can suggest should be referred to the judicial inquiry, unless he has knowledge which he fails to disclose to the house.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, perhaps my hon. friend should look into the situation and should read the order in council setting up the Dorion inquiry. Perhaps to clarify this I might read to the house, and I shall be glad to table this, a communication, a letter which I have just received from the Minister of Justice on this matter, and it reads as follows:

My dear Prime Minister:

On Friday, March 4th, as recorded on page 2211 on *Hansard* I stated that the Leader of the Opposition "was accusing us of hiding the truth, of hiding evidence from the committee."

I added that he was "the very last person in the house who can afford to give advice on the handling of security cases in Canada," and I also said "I want the right honourable gentleman to tell the house about his participation in the Monseigneur case when he was Prime Minister of this country."

To this the right honourable gentleman replied "I am not worried. Have your commission look into it. Put it on the agenda."

Mr. Churchill: That is the general one you mentioned.

Mr. Pearson: The letter goes on:

I have subsequently indicated that the Leader of the Opposition had failed to place the file on this case before the law officers of the Department of Justice for their advice, that the information given to the Leader of the Opposition when he was Prime Minister concerned a case in which security risks were involved.

I have alleged that the Leader of the Opposition mishandled this case and that he failed to seek the advice of the law officers of the Department of Justice as to the appropriate method of dealing with the case, and I am willing and anxious to have these allegations considered by a judicial inquiry which will be free to examine all aspects of the case. I will abide by the result of such inquiry, fully conscious of the consequences.

I have made and make no other charges.

Yours sincerely,

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

An hon. Member: Holy, holy, holy.

Mr. Starr: You cannot get away with that.

An hon. Member: Cardinism.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair recognizes the hon. member for Ontario.

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised and shocked by the Prime Minister's reading a letter of this kind, knowing full well that since those utterances were

made, that are set out in this letter, the Minister of Justice has had a press conference in which he has gone beyond what happened—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Starr: —on Friday. I am shocked and surprised now that the Prime Minister is an instrument and an accomplice to the spreading of rumours that are being spread around by the Minister of Justice, who has disgraced his position, which is one of the most respected positions in this country, to do with the meting out of justice.

The Minister of Justice in his press conference stated that there were more than two ministers involved. That means that any number can be involved. It is not enough that the Prime Minister stands in his place now and says, "We are prepared to have a judicial inquiry". It is not enough. Names have to be named now, before that inquiry is made. I specifically ask the Prime Minister, is it his intention, and does he do this intentionally? Does he intend that the cloud of suspicion should rest upon the heads of all those who are innocent?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Starr: And if it is not, if it is not his intention then he should now clear the names of all those upon whom the cloud of suspicion has been cast by the Minister of Justice in his act of Cardinism, as is pointed out in all the newspapers across this country, who are ashamed of the Minister of Justice in the way he has conducted himself in that portfolio. The charges are not only levied against him, but the Prime Minister who is the head of the government is being implicated.

I think all of us in the House of Commons should see to it that the position of the Prime Minister of this country, whoever he may be, cannot be besmirched by anyone who wants to practise the sort of thing that the Minister of Justice is doing at this time.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the Prime Minister either deliberately or unintentionally is confusing the entire question which is before the house. The question before the house is the question of privilege.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Douglas: Charges have been made by one of the Prime Minister's ministers, charges which have not been substantiated, charges which reflect very seriously upon members of this house, and some who may be outside this house.