

Supply—Justice

I should like to refer also to citation 152 (4), which reads:

All references to judges and courts of justice and to personages of high official station, of the nature of personal attack and censure, have always been considered unparliamentary—

Now, I understand that the line of argument taken by the hon. member for Greenwood is this: I am not, myself, saying these things, but I am repeating what other people have said. In my submission, this is an attempt by the hon. member to do indirectly what he cannot, under our rules, do directly. I submit, therefore, that he cannot continue along this line and that his remarks on this subject are out of order.

Mr. Douglas: Is it your ruling, Mr. Chairman, that the subject is closed and the hon. member for Greenwood cannot discuss the matter further and, consequently, the Minister of Justice cannot reply?

The Chairman: I cannot anticipate what the hon. member for Greenwood may wish to discuss from now on, but I am ruling that what has been said up until now has been out of order.

Mr. Brewin: It may be that on some other occasion, Mr. Chairman, I will have an opportunity, within your ruling, to complete the remarks I intended to make. I intended to point out that I was doing this so that a judge would be able to clear his reputation because, in my view, the administration of justice demands that something be done about this matter.

Mr. Fisher: Mr. Chairman, on the first point that you raised—

Mr. Chevrier: Order, the chairman has handed down a judgment.

Mr. Fisher: We have an opportunity to appeal it.

I should like a further elaboration of the first point you raised, Mr. Chairman, concerning the administration of justice not being the responsibility of the Minister of Justice. We passed a bill in this house raising the salaries of judges. I have a file of letters from judges on various matters, and I think many of us have been in communication with judges. We are quite aware of the fact it is the federal government that chooses judges, and pays them. The point I should like to make is, if this precedent is allowed to stand some remarks I intended to make about judges which had nothing to do with this judge, would be out of order. I do not know what the process is, but I would appeal to you, sir, to reconsider that part of your ruling.

Mr. Chevrier: May I—

[The Chairman.]

The Chairman: Perhaps I might say one word here. I should like to make my ruling as restricted as possible. I am not suggesting that no one can discuss anything relating in any way to judges. I feel that the ruling which has been made by the Chair at this point should be limited to the particular circumstances which were before the committee at that time.

Mr. Bell: I wonder if I might ask a question of the Prime Minister, without taking the place of the hon. member for Medicine Hat in the order of debate?

I just want to ask the Prime Minister, appreciating the seriousness of his statement as well as the drama that has been created around the corridors by members of the press, if he can give us his assurance that there has not been any recent episode or breach of security that brought about this statement?

Mr. Pearson: I can give that assurance without equivocation. We have been working on this revision of security procedure for some two or three months now, and as soon as the work was completed and the opportunity arose on these estimates, we brought it to the house. There is no particular circumstance which made that desirable at this particular time.

Mr. Olson: Mr. Chairman, I had intended to say quite a lot about the matter of the security and intelligence division of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and the method they have in determining who ultimately becomes a security risk. The statement which has been made by the Prime Minister tonight concerning the three steps he has suggested will be taken in the future, to some extent will answer the matters I was going to raise. I am not sure we can accept these provisions as the ultimate answer to the problem that we have in these security risks. I agree, too, that I do not believe it is possible at this stage to comment upon all the ramifications of these steps, or the success that they might be. For the present, Mr. Chairman, I am willing to give this a trial and see what happens.

I know that in my own constituency, and I am sure in the constituency of nearly every member in this house, there are Canadian citizens and other people who have been refused citizenship who honestly believe that wrong evidence has been presented to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in classifying them as security risks. I hope these steps the Prime Minister has outlined will, in fact, provide an opportunity to these people to present their case to someone. Perhaps, as the Prime Minister has said, they could even be faced with some of the information that has condemned them.