

Supply—Justice

Mr. Favreau: He never said that heads would roll.

Mr. Pearson: I am only showing some emotion, Mr. Chairman, because, as the hon. member knows from reading the press statements, he did not say that heads will roll: He said heads will swim. Surely there is some difference between heads rolling and heads swimming.

Mr. Woolliams: I am glad the Prime Minister corrected me in that regard, but I think I have read something which indicated that he has said heads would roll. Perhaps the Prime Minister has a better idea of what he said as a result of reading all the pertinent reports, because he has more time than I have. Let us assume that he said heads would swim rather than that heads would roll. Surely we are not talking about physical swimming, and when an individual gets dizzy and excited it is usually because he is disturbed at being close to the hot seat, or close to the facts. This is a psychological factor, a part of human behaviour.

Surely this man should have an inquiry, even if it is held in camera. In this regard let us consider what the national newspapers have said. First let us look at the *Gazette* of February 2, 1966. In an editorial that appeared in that issue the following is stated:

Prime Minister Pearson's decision to consider establishing a judicial inquiry in the alleged spy case involving George Victor Spencer is another example of the Government's tendency to reverse its stand.

Apparently a reversal of stand was anticipated. The editorial then continues as follows:

The Government's actions in the Spencer case became, over the months, so peculiar that judicial investigation would ultimately be necessary to justify them. For here was the case of a young civil servant, working in a minor job in a post office, who was alleged to have been in some way involved with the attempts made by officials of the Russian Embassy in Ottawa to carry out espionage. The espionage activity of the Russian Embassy officials was considered to be sufficiently serious for the Government of Canada to insist on their expulsion from Canada.

Mr. Pearson informed the House of Commons in the spring that the Russians had been in contact with three Canadians. Two of them had co-operated with the police and thereby played a valuable part in exposing the plot. The third Canadian had not been co-operative. Or as Mr. Pearson put it, in the case of this third Canadian "the circumstances unfortunately were different".

I assume that was in reference to the Spencer case. If the circumstances are different, why is he still under surveillance? The editorial then continues and states:

The name of this third Canadian was not given. But he was later identified by a Vancouver newspaper as George Victor Spencer. And Spencer himself readily admitted that he was the one who had been mentioned in Parliament. He is alleged to have gone further and to have made the extraordinary statement that if he were to tell all he knew about Russian espionage operations, "heads would be rolling in Canada and elsewhere".

That is where I read the expression. I knew I had read it somewhere during lunch time, and apparently he made this statement on another occasion. The editorial then states:

The Government, however, declined to take legal proceedings against Spencer. The grounds given were that the evidence was not of such a nature as would be likely to procure a conviction in court, and that such a trial would disclose too much of Canada's counter-espionage methods.

Had the matter rested at this point, there might still have been questioning about the Government's decision.

Later in the editorial the following is stated:

The different pieces of the Spencer case became harder and harder to reconcile. If the man was considered, after careful examination and an interview, to be unsuitable even as a 'junior civil servant' working outside Ottawa in a 'non-sensitive job,' his disqualifications must have been serious.

I agree with the *Montreal Gazette* in that regard. The editorial continues:

If they were of a nature having nothing to do with his alleged involvement in the Russian espionage activity, his dismissal from his post should have taken place in the normal course of events—

This information should have been made public, but it has not been made public. The last paragraph of this editorial states:

It is necessary that the assurance should be given, by means of a judicial inquiry, that what has been done in this strange case has been done on sufficient grounds.

That is the position taken by the *Gazette*. The *Toronto Globe and Mail* of November 27, 1965 had this to say about the Minister of Justice and his dealings in this case:

In this case, there is not sufficient evidence of a legally admissible character to ensure reasonable likelihood of conviction.

That is reportedly a statement made by the Minister of Justice. I would like to hear the Minister of Justice explain this situation. Because some law officer's opinion is that there is not a likelihood of conviction, but because there is some evidence against Spencer he is fired from his position, his salary is