

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): If there was no railroading, why were they taken to Nova Scotia?

Mr. GUTHRIE: That was done to suit the convenience of the department and its officials. The board is not being held for an isolated case; probably half a dozen cases will be heard. One of the reasons for its being held in Halifax is because the ships sail from that port.

Mr. EULER: It is very hard on the men charged.

Mr. GUTHRIE: I grant you. A crime charged against a man is investigated in that man's province; that is, when we are speaking of criminal charges. These men may not be charged with any criminal offence; possibly they will not.

Mr. BROWN: All the worse.

Mr. GUTHRIE: But if they are here in breach of the provisions of our law, they may be deported. They may be thoroughly undesirable people, and as such they are liable to deportation. There may be no charge of a criminal nature in connection with them.

Mr. BROWN: That makes it all the worse.

Mr. GUTHRIE: But the law is there, and if it is there it should be enforced. The way to get rid of a bad law is to enforce it.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): If the law can be enforced to any such wild extremes as this, I have never before heard of anything of the kind being done. Will the minister give me some illustrations? I have already cited to the committee cases in which I was personally interested and affected, and in which the investigation took place in the province concerned. I cannot understand the minister's point of view.

Mr. SPEAKMAN: I quite realize that the Minister of Justice is not the responsible minister, and also that it is unsafe to become too much excited over newspaper reports. But at the moment, until we have other information, we can proceed only on the assumption that there is some foundation of fact in the statements that have appeared, coupled with the telegram which has been received. During the last ten years, while I have been a member, I have been endeavouring to instil into people from other lands who are in my province and in my riding, those principles which I consider to be sound, of the Canadian spirit, the British institutions which I have always

felt were fine, noble, the best we have in this imperfect world. In particular I have been holding them up in comparison with the customs in other lands and the ideas of men who come from other countries, and have been doing my best to make of these men real Canadians. One of the things I have always held up has been just that which has been cited, that any man in this country, whether a citizen by birth or naturalization or simply a resident who has come within our borders, is assured, no matter who he is or what he has done, of fair treatment and a fair chance. I am not defending those men; I do not know them. If they have done anything wrong—and I assume they may have—I am the last man to condone the wrong, any more than I would condone a murder or approve any crime. But I would also be the last man to stand by and see even a murderer lynched or hurried to conviction without a fair trial. Where a man is charged with commission of a crime if the accused cannot provide counsel or has no funds, the court, in its meticulous care that British justice be upheld, will furnish counsel for him. If what has happened is as has been stated, the minister is right in saying that no law has been broken, but he is not right when he says that in doing that, they were simply obeying the law. There is a great difference between obeying the law—that is in doing something that the law commands—and simply staying within the limits of the law.

Mr. GUTHRIE: I referred to the actions of the mounted police.

Mr. SPEAKMAN: Quite so. I make no criticism of the police themselves. They were acting under orders and had no option but to do as they were told; the better policemen they were, the more meticulously would they obey orders, whether they were right or wrong. I am speaking of the authority under which they acted. The minister did not refer to the police obeying the law; he referred to the Minister of Immigration obeying the law. The Minister of Immigration certainly acted within the law; he did not do anything against the law, but the law did not force him to do as he did. It gave him or his department discretion as to where the trials should take place and what action should be taken. The discretion has been within the law. The law itself may be all right, yet good law may be abused. Actions may be within the law but still be not fair or equitable.

I am chiefly interested from this one aspect, that of the effect which the report of such action, if true or if left uncontradicted, will have upon people from other countries among