

*Supply—Justice*

doubt, and by giving him an opportunity to resolve that doubt.

Mr. Chairman, we then improved the effectiveness by also introducing a requirement to insure that a second look would always be taken by a separate body before a dismissal was finally decided upon. This second body was to be a board of review drawn from members of the interdepartmental security panel. Since 1963, Mr. Chairman, this procedure has worked effectively and well.

**Mr. Douglas:** Mr. Chairman, would the Prime Minister permit a question? I do not wish to interrupt his train of thought, but can he tell the committee how often that board has been used and why it was not effective in the Spencer case?

**Mr. Pearson:** I cannot tell my hon. friend exactly how often it has been used because I would have to look that up, but this was a procedure designed to deal with members of the public service who had access to confidential and secret information, and who had to be given special clearance before they were given this kind of an appointment.

Mr. Spencer's case does not come within these procedures because of that fact, but his case, excluded as it was from this procedure, because of the nature of his employment and because of certain other considerations, raised a number of broader issues and has caused a good deal of broad public concern.

Mr. Chairman, the government feels strongly that its actions in the case of Mr. Spencer were correct and that he was treated fairly. It was on that basis we took the action which we have taken. On the other hand, it is the responsibility of the government to insure that the public is satisfied that our security procedures on the whole and in general, covering all public servants and others, preserve that balance of national security and individual rights.

The Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition said in the house last Friday the time had come for a full and complete investigation to see whether our security measures are what they should be. I expressed that view in the past and, indeed, in debates we have had on the Spencer case I have said that a full examination of our security procedures is now desirable. My hon. friend, the member for Burnaby-Coquitlam, has raised this at least once of which I know, on January 31, as recorded on page 434 of *Hansard*, and I believe on other occasions, when he referred to questions of security. In answer to his

[Mr. Pearson.]

query on the orders of the day, I believe on January 31, I indicated that I was concerned with the individual case but that I was also concerned that the inquiry might be extended to other cases, the examination of which might throw further light on our security matters generally. This has already been under discussion now for many weeks.

I should like to assure the members of this committee that in 1963, we took very seriously the request made by certain members and others outside the house that we go into the whole question of security in regard to confidential information and in regard to the attitudes—perhaps “attitudes” is the wrong word—the activities of security officers on university campuses and the like. We did spend a great deal of time on that with the result that in 1963 we brought in the changed procedures to which I have referred.

Just as we were concerned with these general security procedures and problems at that time, so are we concerned now with doubts about our security procedures generally. In the last month or so especially, indeed this goes back over a year, we have been giving careful consideration to the most appropriate means of re-examining these procedures in relation to the security problem that makes them necessary. Unfortunately there is a very real problem which does make security measures necessary.

We hope to introduce legislation shortly which will establish, among other things, the department of the Solicitor General under a minister who will have responsibility for the R.C.M.P. and for security matters. This will be a responsibility to which he will be able to give considerable time, because this increasingly important aspect of the work of the present Department of Justice will then become the responsibility of a separate minister. The new minister will be able to give much closer attention to these difficult problems than has been possible in the past. A high priority function of the new department will be to examine in detail the problems of espionage and subversive activities, and to determine how best to deal with them.

• (4:40 p.m.)

There is also the question, which has been raised by nearly every member who has participated in the discussion, of section 50 of the Civil Service Act, under which Mr. Spencer was discharged, which does not provide for an appeal, and which was retained in the civil service legislation in 1962 by a