

It is O.K. for them to make specious charges, but the minute a charge is made from this side of the House, there is a great uproar from members opposite. They become very indignant.

When I was parliamentary secretary to the minister of national defence, the opposition were after the heads of several officers in the department over the negotiations with the Lockheed Aircraft Company. They thought they smelled a scandal. Because there had been payoffs in other countries, they were sure they would be able to find such things in this country. They now say it was completely the fault of the Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Goyer) who tried to place the blame on the public servants. However, it was members opposite who named public servants early in that debate in the House.

Later today we had the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) make an astounding statement in this House, after we listened for about three weeks to continuous opposition charges that the RCMP was out of control, that it had no respect for the government, and that the government was not aware of what the RCMP was doing.

We had the astonishing statement today by the right hon. apologist from Prince Albert that the government is trying to smear the RCMP. He compounded that ludicrous statement by saying that the government was making contemptuous innuendoes against the RCMP, and referred to the musical chairs of the Solicitor General's department. What about the musical chairs game in the opposition, particularly in the leadership of that party? That charge is, of course, completely unfounded. And as I said earlier, it is obvious that the opposition brought in the right hon. member for Prince Albert today to try to turn the argument around, a facility he has in abundance, I must admit, but which failed today. So he became rather personal and attacked ministers who were absent from the House today on government business, another point the opposition likes continually to make, despite the fact that their attendance is no better than that of government members.

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It was a shallow and hypocritical attempt to cover their tracks. It was they who smeared the RCMP. It was they who laid the original charges against the force. It might well have been that their aim all along was to try to get the minister, and if they destroyed the police force—

Mr. McKenzie: On a point of order, the hon. member has been giving us a number of direct quotations, something which I appreciate, but he is now making charges that we have smeared the reputation of the RCMP, and I should like to hear some direct quotations in justification of those charges.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. If points of order are raised, they should be valid points of order and not merely points of argument.

Security

Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): At least I am not reading a speech made by one of my colleagues seven months ago.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): When did he make it then?

Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): I read from *Hansard* the references to support what I said. Two weeks ago the opposition wanted the government to know everything the RCMP was doing. However, they tell us now this was never the suggestion. They only wanted the government to be in control.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): I regret to interrupt the hon. member but the time allotted to him has expired.

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, this is a significant day on which to be debating such a serious issue as the one now before us. Since the election of the Parti Québécois one year ago today we have heard many speeches and statements about the concept of Canada, about what it is we want for this country, and those speeches and statements have all reflected the fundamental values which we hold in common as Canadians.

It is presumed by all who are concerned with keeping this country together that there are certain basic principles, including adherence to the rule of law and respect for individual freedom, which are shared by all of us, and which justify our people in believing in a united Canada. For many years I have listened to views about national unity, and have taken part in many discussions about the future of our country. Never in all that time did I doubt that the values and beliefs which made Canada what she is were shared by all Canadians. I took it for granted they were there as an underpinning of our society, a foundation upon which we could build the Canada of the future.

However, the evidence of the last two weeks, the revelations of illegal activities which went unquestioned by ministers of the Crown, the abrogation of ministerial responsibility, and the callous neglect of our civil liberties have made me pause and reflect about these basic shared values which I took so much for granted.

I now have to say that there is an even more fundamental question to be asked than how to hold this country together. The evidence of the past few weeks forces one to ask why we would wish to hold the country together. Why should we care about a united country if that united country is to be one in which the values we have cherished throughout our history are to be denied? Will it help us to have a geographical whole *a mari usque ad mare* if within that whole the freedoms and rights of individuals have been shattered? Is it enough to strive for unity without ensuring that democratic principles are guaranteed?

Fundamental to the democratic principles of this country is the belief in ministerial responsibility. Things are changing in this country. The *Globe and Mail* put it very well in a recent