

have that kind of view, that they could come to that kind of conclusion.

Mr. Railton: You know what you can believe and what you cannot believe. You have given a good demonstration of that in the last six years as far as I am concerned. You can believe almost anything.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member may have had too much dinner.

An hon. Member: More than dinner.

Mr. Nielsen: Maybe more than dinner. There was an occasion in this House about five or six years ago when I rose in my place to complain about wiretapping. I related an experience that I had had with my telephone in my parliamentary office. I was conclusively led to believe that my telephone was being tapped, and I complained through the grievance procedure here in the House.

At that time the former member for Vancouver Quadra, Mr. Deachman, moved a motion that the subject matter of my question of privilege be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections. We agreed that it should be referred. I received a letter from the distinguished chairman, who is still chairman of that Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, requesting me to appear before that committee to testify. I said that I would be delighted to appear but for the sake of order perhaps the solicitor general should appear first to explain the policy of the government, and that members of the RCMP should appear following him to explain their activities. Once that had been done I explained that I would be most delighted to appear.

They did not call the solicitor general or the members of the RCMP to testify. The matter had ended and the committee had come back *nulla bona*, as we say in law, with nothing to report. Their tactic clearly was to "MacCarthyize" me on that committee, and when that opportunity was not available to them they stopped. They were very quick in those days to refer this kind of matter to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections but only if they could obtain political advantage. Yet we hear the hypocrisy of the President of Privy Council saying that we are taking this action for political purposes. We are not doing that at all.

Mr. Railton: Beautifully done. I should congratulate you.

Mr. Nielsen: We are taking this action for the purpose of determining who is telling the truth. There have been all sorts of contributions in this debate as to whom we are to believe. We are told by members opposite that once a minister stands in his place, then by the traditions of this House we must believe him. Yet we are confronted with the testimony before the McDonald commission which throws doubt on that belief.

We are not alone in coming to these conclusions. This has been a subject matter for the press throughout the country for a good long time. The Parliamentary Secretary to the President of Privy Council (Mr. Pinard) is not in the House, I am

Privilege—Mr. Lawrence

sorry to say. He complained about headlines in the press to the effect that the Speaker ruled that a government letter misled members of parliament. That is exactly what he ruled—the *prima facie* case that is being submitted to parliament to refer to a committee. The hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Goodale) shakes his head in a negative manner.

● (2022)

Mr. Goodale: Did you hear him speak?

Mr. Nielsen: I heard him speak. I have been sitting here throughout this debate. The hon. member for Assiniboia has not. I have heard every word and have gone to the trouble of getting the blues so I know precisely what was said today and yesterday. I assert that the press stories are perfectly true. The hon. member for Northumberland-Durham was misled; there can be no question about that.

Mr. Railton: He is easy to mislead.

Mr. Nielsen: He was told that mail was not opened.

Mr. Railton: Five years ago.

Mr. Nielsen: I heard that too from the hon. member for Northumberland-Miramichi (Mr. Dionne), but the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham did not find out about this until the testimony came forth in the McDonald inquiry. Then he raised it at the first opportunity. There is no doubt—

Mr. Railton: It took five years.

Mr. Nielsen: The hon. member for Welland says it took five years. How can he complain about something that does not surface for five years? The hon. members received that letter in 1973 and did not learn it was false until the testimony was given before the royal commission that we set up to look into these matters.

Mr. Railton: It is not false yet. Who says it is false?

Mr. Nielsen: It is patently false. He was told in that letter—

Mr. Railton: It has got to be true. You are making a lot out of nothing.

Mr. Nielsen: If what the hon. member for Welland says is true—that what the solicitor general said in the letter was true—then we would not be going through this exercise.

Mr. Railton: Yes, you would. You would do it anyway just to mislead us and the country. That is what your main line is, to mislead the country.

Mr. Nielsen: This is the old line, that we are a nuisance over here, a thorn under their saddle and we should be abolished—get us the heck out so that they can go on their own sweet way.

Mr. Railton: The country is wising up to this.

Mr. Nielsen: Indeed, they are! That is reflected in certain headlines I have read in the last two or three days.