

ment could not do anything else than that which they did and that they acted wisely and humanely in granting a reprieve since the result was to give the man a new trial, the consequence of which was an acquittal? In view of the circumstances in this case, whatever may be the private opinion which any one may have, we must take it that justice has been done to this man. His life was saved and he was found guilty not of murder, but of manslaughter. Under such circumstances would it not have been shocking to believe that if this reprieve had not been given this man would have been executed for a crime for which, after all, he was found not to be guilty? My hon. friend from East Grey says that there is an impression growing that certain lawyers have an influence upon the government and can get almost any sentence commuted. I disagree altogether from my hon. friend. I do not believe there is any such impression abroad in the country. I do not agree that such an impression is growing because there is no evidence to support any such imputation upon the government. Nobody can boast that he has any such influence upon the government. The facts of this case prove to the contrary. Counsel for this man asked for the commutation of the sentence. It was refused. They asked for a reprieve. It was granted and what followed showed that the reprieve had been properly granted. If the second trial, after the reprieve had been granted, had resulted in the same manner as the first, then my hon. friend would have had some ground for his contention, but when the reprieve was granted and the granting of it was justified by the courts my hon. friend has no justification for saying that there was any improper influence brought to bear upon the case.

Mr. SPROULE. The right hon. gentleman improperly accuses me of saying something I did not say.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I am very glad to hear it.

Mr. SPROULE. I made absolutely no reference to the case at all although I know something about it. Nor would I pretend to say there was anything wrong. But I did say what I know to be a fact because I move enough around in the world to hear what is current talk; I said there was a growing feeling in that direction, and if giving these papers to the public disclosed the fact that there was nothing wrong, I said it would go a long way to disabuse the public mind of that impression and satisfy every one that the Department of Justice was right. That is the only feature of it I pretended to talk about. I did not accuse the government of anything wrong in this case nor do I pretend to say there was anything wrong. But I

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desire to impress upon the government that if anything can be done, by giving publicity to these papers or anything else, to disabuse the public mind of that growing impression it would do a great deal of good in the country.

Mr. LANCASTER. I rise to say a word, principally in corroboration of what has been said by the hon. member for Grey (Mr. Sproule). I did not understand the hon. gentleman to say that he thought these things were as common talk makes them, but I am bound to say that we in that district of the province of Ontario not far from Toronto, and on the streets of Toronto, continually hear that a certain half dozen lawyers in the city of Toronto can get anything they want from this government providing the men who want it will give them the money. I am not saying this is so, but I am saying that certain lawyers are taking advantage of that impression in the city of Toronto, and the member for Grey (Mr. Sproule) is right in saying that if these papers are brought down and show there was ground for this reprieve it will go a long way to remove that idea. I do not say it myself, but if people believe these things the country suffers. I have not yet heard any good reason given why these papers should not be brought down. If these papers contain the information that the Minister of Justice and the Prime Minister say they contain everything will be all right and the people can see it is so. The hon. gentleman from Centre York (Mr. Wallace) and his constituents will see if the papers are brought down that things are in a proper condition. I must say that on the main point, the rights of the hon. gentleman are being disregarded by the Minister of Justice. Surely this government is responsible to parliament for their action in advising the Governor General. The Minister of Justice has not said in so many words that they are not, but that is the logical result of his contention. If that is what he means, I must dissent from the view that the cabinet can advise the Governor General in regard to these matters and not be responsible to parliament as to why they gave that advice. There is a very good reason why the papers should be brought down, and it would be for the public good if they were brought down.

Mr. LEWIS. Am I in order, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. SPEAKER. Not except by way of explanation; the hon. member has already spoken.

Mr. LEWIS. I did not say nor do I wish it to be inferred that I thought there was anything wrong at headquarters, but there has been a travesty of justice, there