

*Royal Canadian Mounted Police*

which could be necessary, in keeping with the security requirements of our country.

Even if the commission is particularly requested to inquire into matters related to the security service of the RCMP, the government has also requested to have brought to its attention any incident involving illegal action on the part of RCMP members, outside of security service operations. Regular police operations are more immediately submitted to the control and surveillance of the courts. Nevertheless, the government prefers not to restrict the terms of reference of the commission to the security service, so that eventually it could know about incidents involving unlawful acts that could be drawn to the attention of the commission. Thus, the government will be able to take the necessary steps at the appropriate time.

[English]

I cannot emphasize too strongly the importance of the commission whose establishment I have just announced. We must, as I have just mentioned, get to the bottom of those allegations which have been made recently against RCMP members. This process will, I hope, help to clear the air and improve the climate within which our national police force is now working.

In a democratic society such as ours, the policies and procedures which govern the activities of the security service must conform with the rule of law. At the same time, the rule of law must be responsive to the requirements of our national security. The rule of law and the requirements of national security constitute two facets of one unique reality which have never been easy to reconcile even in countries with firm democratic traditions. The recommendations of the commission will, I am confident, assist us in meeting this ever present challenge.

As I said on June 17 last, the rule of law is and must be paramount. It constitutes the vital force of our society without which our basic freedoms run the risk of becoming empty slogans. Clearly, there can be no compromise in this regard; it is upon the rule of law that the integrity and survival of our democratic institutions and our fundamental liberties are based. The recommendations of the commission will help us, I have no doubt, to improve the policies and procedures that govern the activities of the security service, and will help us as well in our search for ways to improve the working of the security service in the vital role assigned to it for the protection of our national security.

I take pleasure in informing the House that Mr. Justice D. C. McDonald of the Supreme Court of Alberta will be chairman of the commission, the other members of which will be Mr. Donald S. Rickard of Toronto, and Mr. Guy Gilbert of Montreal. With the consent of the House I should like to table in both official languages official copies of the terms of reference of the commission.

**Mr. Nowlan:** You can't get away with that.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

[Mr. Fox.]

**Mr. Nowlan:** You members opposite should be crying, not clapping.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The minister's request to table a document is made after the tabling of documents has been called and therefore requires the unanimous consent of the House. Does the minister have consent to table those documents?

**Mr. Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the tabling of the documents—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. It is not a debatable proposition. Either the minister has unanimous consent to table the documents, or he has not. Does the minister have the consent of the House to table the documents?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Lawrence:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The documents cannot be tabled at this time.

**Mr. Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member cannot raise a point of order at this particular moment.

**Mr. Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, the point concerns the tabling of the document. I rise on a question of privilege.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. According to the procedure under which we are now operating, the minister may make a statement, which is met with a statement in reply made by the parties. I am prepared to call on spokesmen of the various parties and allow questioning, within some discretion, but at the moment I am not aware that I am able to consider a point of order in respect of any of these proceedings.

**Mr. Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege, which is this. The Solicitor General (Mr. Fox) mentioned the tabling of certain terms of reference concerning a public inquiry or royal commission. Mr. Speaker, those could just as easily have been read to the House for inclusion in *Hansard*. In this way all people would know the exact terms of reference. I feel my privileges have been abridged by the minister's failure to do this. His action therefore deprives me of the necessary knowledge I must have in order to evaluate properly the statement the minister just made.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order or question of privilege, whichever it may be. If we are to respond seriously to the statement concerning the announcement of the inquiry or establishment of the commission, surely it is relevant that all members should be aware of the terms of reference within which the royal commission will work. I had the opportunity to read them, and they raise certain questions in my mind. I suspect they will raise questions in the minds of others, and are therefore relevant. Members should know them. I appeal through you, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. I