

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, you will recall that when the report of the Royal Commission on Security was brought down before the House a couple of years ago, one of the recommendations was to take security and intelligence away from the RCMP and to make it a purely civilian function. At that time we did not do this; we left it under the authority of the commissioner of the RCMP but under the directorship of a gentleman reporting to the commissioner and to the minister, a gentleman who was from the civil side of our society. I remember at the time there was criticism of this decision from hon. gentlemen opposite because we had not followed the recommendation and had not taken security and intelligence entirely away from the RCMP. I find it strange now that they are criticizing the general compromise position we took of leaving security and intelligence under the RCMP. I think they will have to make up their minds.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Diefenbaker: This is a question of privilege.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I wish to rise—

Mr. Speaker: The right hon. gentleman should resume his seat, and then I will recognize him. He says he has a question of privilege and I will recognize him for that purpose.

Mr. Diefenbaker: The right hon. gentleman cannot get away with such a subterfuge. That is too patently transparent even for him who, two years ago—

Some hon. Members: Question!

Mr. Diefenbaker: —in December, said that inflation had been beaten and the government had done it. I have before me the recommendations referred to by the former Solicitor General at page 8026 of *Hansard* for September 21, 1971 when there was set up a security planning and research group. That research group dealt with insurrection potentialities in Canada but not with other matters that come within the jurisdiction of the RCMP.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: I am not sure whether the right hon. gentleman is on a question of privilege or whether he intends to ask a question. It seems to me that we are obviously having a debate at present. The right hon. gentleman should ask the question.

Mr. Diefenbaker: May I say with great deference, Sir, that a debate consists of a difference of opinions. This is a fact that I am placing before the House, not the imaginary conjuring up of something to explain by the Prime Minister. I ask him this, and it is a simple question. He is in charge of security. Why has it become necessary to remove from the RCMP the protection of the security of classified information? Why has that been done?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been asked. The right hon. Prime Minister might be allowed to reply. We have gone beyond the question period, but I will

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recognize the hon. member for Scarborough West and the hon. member for Fraser Valley West. We will have one question at a time. First, the right hon. Prime Minister might be allowed to reply to the question asked.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I am always very deferential, but there is a matter at stake here that is dangerous to our country. I want to know why there has been a change. Is the government trying to cover up? Has it some confidential, secret documents that it does not want the RCMP to have?

• (1220)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. For the last five minutes I have been trying to give the right hon. Prime Minister an opportunity to reply. Unless there are many other points of order and questions of privilege, I will then try to recognize, as I said, the hon. member for Scarborough West who has been attempting to get the floor for the past 25 minutes on another question.

Mr. Cossitt: Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I apologize to the right hon. Prime Minister. He will have to wait to reply to the right hon. member for Prince Albert.

Mr. Cossitt: Mr. Speaker, in deference to the office of the Prime Minister I will hold my question of privilege until he replies.

Mr. Speaker: We must have some order. The hon. member should state his question of privilege now. After that I will allow the Prime Minister to reply and the hon. member for Scarborough West to ask his question, and perhaps by that time we will be able to call it one o'clock.

Mr. Cossitt: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. On Wednesday last the Solicitor General gave his answer to starred question No. 1,779 which I had placed on the order paper, on the subject of the Police and Security Planning and Analysis Group. The right hon. member for Prince Albert has just now drawn the attention of the House to information previously given on this same subject in the days of the predecessor of the minister, and I find that there is a very material difference. Indeed, I would say the discrepancies are startling, and this leads me to question most seriously whether the rights and the privileges of the members of this House have been interfered with in some way.

What exactly has happened here? One of the ministers involved, either the present minister or his predecessor, was not correct in the information he gave to this House, or else the functions of the Police and Security Planning and Analysis Group have been fantastically expanded. I respectfully submit that either of these two possibilities raises a very distinct matter of privilege.

An examination of the answer given by the minister on Wednesday last to starred question No. 1,779 clearly shows that the minister states that the Police and Security Planning and Analysis Group has assumed functions that were, in effect, categorically denied in the previous information given to the House. To illustrate this I refer to the answer given to part 1 of my question on last Wednesday,