SIU

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I suggest that this would be an inquiry which the RCMP would conduct in the same way as it conducts any other investigation. It would use various techniques at the disposal of the police. This does not involve the police force, in the normal investigation of matters, with power to call witnesses and force testimony under oath. They apply other methods in conducting an investigation. This investigation, I repeat, is being conducted by the RCMP.

Mr. Stanfield: In depth?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Yes, I believe it will be an in-depth inquiry. There are matters here of a doubtful nature. Allegations are being made, according to information I received on April 29, which I considered ought to be dealt with. There should be an effort made to asertain whether these are valid allegations. If they are, they may warrant further action. They may warrant criminal charges being laid; that is possible. The investigation does not preclude that possibility, if these matters are to be looked into. This does not preclude the possibility that this matter may warrant a full-depth inquiry of the nature some hon. members of the House are calling for.

Mr. Stanfield: And who decides that?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): The government of the day decides these questions.

Mr. Stanfield: They are still secret.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): The Leader of the Opposition must be aware of this. This does not mean that my colleague, the Minister of Justice, is not determined to look at the material available. But that is not the basis on which a full inquiry should be conducted. In this country we do not have an inquisitorial type of justice. We do not have the possibility of undertaking some kind of search unless there is something substantive on which to base the search. That is why the RCMP have been called in. It is on the basis of information they received. As far as I am concerned, it is to determine, especially in those areas that deal with the full industrial relations sector, whether there is enough substance to any of those allegations to warrant further action along the lines recommended. I already indicated that we made the further conclusion with regard to hiring practices.

● (1600)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): I thank the hon. Minister for his answer. I now have a short question for him. Has the RCMP been given a deadline for its inquiry and report to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang)?

[*English*]

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, there is no set period of time when this matter will be in the hands of the RCMP. I can only hope, as does the House, that the RCMP will conduct their investigation with dispatch.

Mr. Lawrence: Mr. Speaker, I do not think we fulfil our responsibilities in this House by beating around the bush as we have done this afternoon. There are two large "why's" that come out of this weak, vacillating, mealy-mouthed statement of the minister this afternoon. They both relate back to him and the extremely partisan, political way that he has conducted himself in this House. They relate back to serious allegations about a cozy relationship between this and other ministers with this particular union.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. When I hear statements like that from the hon. member who just sat down, I just shudder at the thought that he could occupy the position of attorney general of the province of Ontario. Allegations of cozy relationships and innuendoes with regard to my personal character are totally unwarranted. If the hon. member had the instinct of any responsible parliamentarian, instead of indulging in this type of filth he would be fully aware that the RCMP were called in to investigate these allegations of cozy relationships and bribes alleged by Dr. Shulman. All the federal officials, including the cabinet ministers named, were thoroughly investigated by the RCMP. The RCMP exonerated those officials of the charges. This champion of parliamentary democracy ignores the exoneration completely and reiterates charges that have been proved false. I think that type of conduct is disgraceful.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The fact of the matter is that the new provisions under which we are operating do not provide for any further speeches or statements on the other side. We are in a period where questions can be put to the minister. This is not the time for representations. If the hon. member has questions, I ask him to put them.

Mr. Lawrence: Mr. Speaker, they both relate back to the same thing, the whole question here of that relationship. It is an admitted relationship. Let me just put my two questions. First, the RCMP obviously needs no directive or mandate from this particular minister to investigate the SIU. There is no question about that whatsoever. If it is an RCMP investigation, I simply ask the minister, why is it not the Department of Justice; why is it the Department of Labour? That is my principal question.

If it is a police investigation, why is it not a normal investigation? Why is it not a full-fledged inquiry? The minister has just indicated we are not going to have that. Is this inquiry going to be open? Is it going to be judicial? Are there going to be subpoena powers? Will they have the powers of contempt provisions? This all goes back to the fact that these are going to be civil servants under this particular minister. My first question is, why is it not a Department of Justice investigation? Why is it not a judicial inquiry? Why could they not find a judge, another Cliche, to do a proper job instead of a whitewash?

Under all these circumstances, and with all these serious allegations, the one remaining main question that the minister has not answered today is, why the delay in doing this? Why did they not do it a long time ago? If the minister does not like these imputations and allegations, then obviously the question still arises: the best way of defeating that type of thing last November when the issue first came up would have been to appoint a full-fledged