

Hansard—Altering of Report

I understand, as the hon. member points out and as some hon. members know, prior to the time vegetable oils became popular margarine was made from animal fats and fish oils. There was not any margarine made from anything else. My understanding is that it is not that type of margarine which is declared to be illegal.

The same form goes to every province in Canada, including Quebec, and the three questions which I read into the record a little while ago are on it. In reporting what they were doing, the institutions did say they were buying margarine. We did not ask them to define what they meant by "margarine", and we have never accused them of breaking the law. I do not want it understood that anything I said on Friday contained implications that we were accusing anybody of breaking the law. It was because I heard so many suggestions afterwards that they were breaking the law that I thought any action whatever was necessary. If it had been a day earlier in the week, I would never have thought of doing anything other than what the rules state, namely bringing the matter before this house.

But as the Speaker has already pointed out, by the time I got around to him it was two minutes before six o'clock and the house adjourned at six o'clock. The only reason I went to the press at all was to point out to them what it would mean to have people publish the idea all over this country, during the long week end from Friday night until Monday morning, that some people had broken the law when as a matter of fact we knew they had not broken the law, in so far as we knew. For that reason, I did suggest that probably if the press could withhold—

Mr. Knowles: May I remind Your Honour that you asked the hon. member for Macleod not to discuss the strangers in the gallery with respect to this matter.

Mr. Gardiner: Most members who spoke said they were not strangers to me.

Mr. Speaker: I did ask him, but he did discuss strangers in the gallery.

Mr. Gardiner: In any case, the suggestion was simply made that if possible further publicity be withheld until Monday; that is, from Saturday morning until Monday. As hon. members know, there is no afternoon press Saturday anyway, therefore that did not mean very much. But they convinced me that it was absolutely impossible. The messages had gone out. As I understand it, they went out at about half past four, and I did not get around to checking it until it was close to six o'clock. Therefore there was not anything

[Mr. Gardiner.]

that could be done about it. They were kind enough to suggest to me that I submit a statement to them, and I gave them a two-line statement which I read out a few moments ago.

Mr. Coldwell: Instead of running to the Speaker and to *Hansard*, would it not have been well to wait and rise on a question of privilege in the house to clear up the matter?

Mr. Gardiner: It might have been. In order to accommodate the Leader of the Opposition, I am going to say to him that I understand the rules of the house very well.

Mr. Drew: That makes it far worse.

Mr. Gardiner: I have been here for 20 years and I have never asked anybody to take anything out of *Hansard* before, and that ought to be good enough reason for saying there ought to be a special reason this time. Suggestions have been made in some articles that have appeared in the press, and certain individuals have been named, and it has been said that they brought pressure to bear on me. They did not bring any pressure to bear on me at all, any more than I brought pressure to bear on the Speaker. He has indicated to you that there was no pressure.

As a matter of fact, I realized that if I had not made the suggestion which I did make, the insinuations which I heard today—and they are insinuations that the law had been broken—were going to go out over the whole week end from Saturday to Sunday, and it would be almost impossible to catch up with them. So I was quite prepared to let anybody abuse me from now until I go out of politics with regard to the matter in order to see to it that persons of that kind, and institutions of that kind, were not being condemned, as they have been condemned over the week end, not by the Canadian Press but by some newspapers. They were not to be condemned without knowing that there was no intention on my part or on the part of any of the officials in my department to say that they had been breaking the law. In my opinion, they have not been.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker,—

Mr. Gardiner: Again may I say I sat down without apologizing. I do apologize.

Mr. Drew: Do not let me prevent you.

Mr. Gardiner: I do apologize for having made it necessary—and I say "necessary" advisedly—to have this discussion. I think that if it concerned only myself I would have seen to it that this discussion did not take place. But knowing this house as I know it, and particularly those who sit on the