

## [Translation]

4. be authorized to sit at such time and at such places as they may decide from time to time, to have complete access to personnel and information available in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and to be provided with adequate working accommodation and clerical assistance;

5. be authorized to engage the services of such staff and technical advisers as they deem necessary or advisable and also the services of counsel to aid them and assist in their inquiry at such rates of remuneration and reimbursement as may be approved by the Treasury Board;

6. be directed to follow established security procedures with regard to their staff and technical advisers and the handling of classified information at all stages of the inquiry;

## [English]

7. be authorized to exercise all the powers conferred upon them by section 11 of the Inquiries Act; and

8. be directed to report to the Governor in Council with all reasonable dispatch and file with the Privy Council Office their papers and records as soon as reasonably may be after the conclusion of the inquiry.

The Committee further advise that, pursuant to section 37 of the Judges Act, His Honour Mr. Justice McDonald be authorized to act as Commissioner for the purposes of the said Commission and that Mr. Justice McDonald be the Chairman of the Commission.

Certified to be a true copy, signed by the Clerk of the Privy Council.

To facilitate the reading of the material by hon. members I would once again request the consent of the House to table the full text of the document in both official languages so that hon. members may examine it at their leisure.

**Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the reading by the Solicitor General (Mr. Fox) of a document which, however, he should have had the courtesy to circulate to all members of the House, as he did to members of the Press Gallery, before coming to the House of Commons.

I should like to ask the Solicitor General whether it is the view and the intention of the government that the terms of reference which he has just read allow the commissioners to require testimony under oath and preferably in public from the former solicitor general, the present Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Goyer), concerning his precise role as the minister responsible for the RCMP during the period and concerning the events into which the inquiry will inquire.

**Mr. Fox:** Mr. Speaker, I think that once hon. members have had the opportunity to examine the terms of reference in detail, particularly paragraphs (a), (b), and (c), they will see that the terms of reference are drafted in very broad terms. It will be up to the commission to decide whom they would wish to hear. They could, of course, call the former solicitor general, the present Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Goyer), and they could call me and my predecessor in office. The terms of reference are designed to permit the commission of inquiry to do so. Whether or not the commission would do it in camera or in public depends on the decision of the commission itself in conformity with its terms of reference and powers.

**Mr. Goyer:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege—

**An hon. Member:** Sit down.

*Royal Canadian Mounted Police*

**Mr. Clark:** Mr. Speaker, the minister claims a question of privilege—perhaps he should speak first.

**Mr. Goyer:** I have already stated in the House of Commons that never before March, 1976, did I have any knowledge of illegal activities being committed by the RCMP—either prior to or following their occurrence. The Solicitor General (Mr. Fox) stated that the RCMP had given him the assurance that L'Agence de Presse Libre du Québec incident was an isolated incident and, as far as I know, this was correct. It is only today that I learned of alleged involvement of RCMP members in other illegal activities over the years, and I am pleased that a royal commission has been appointed to verify and study these allegations.

I can assure the commission of my fullest co-operation. It is important to ensure that the police abide by the country's laws and that the RCMP image be respected both within and outside Canada.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I take it that the purpose of that intervention might be in anticipation of a reply to the question raised by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) as to whether or not it would be the intention of the minister to appear before the commission.

**Mr. Clark:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I was interested in the continuing soap opera of the Minister of Supply and Services. I note that the terms of reference cited specifically by the Solicitor General allow the commissioners to conduct investigations concerning practices that are not authorized. This is contained in paragraphs (a) and (b), the only two parts of the terms of reference that are relevant here. In view of the fact that what is of interest to us in this House is precisely the steps which might—or might not, to give him the benefit of the doubt—have been taken by the present minister of Supply and Services to evade giving the authorization that a minister normally would have given, it appears to me that there is a possibility that these terms of reference—

● (1620)

**Mr. Goyer:** Make a charge!

**Mr. Clark:** The minister should move from soap opera to comic opera. It appears to me that the very careful wording of this particular term of reference relative to authorization would not require the appearance before the inquiry of the Minister of Supply and Services because he claims he did not authorize what should not have happened without his authorization. What I would like to have from the Solicitor General is a categorical undertaking that it is the intention of the Government of Canada to have the Minister of Supply and Services appear before this inquiry in open session, under oath, to explain all aspects and answer all questions relative to the state of his knowledge concerning the activities of the RCMP in any matter being inquired into by the inquiry. May we have that specific undertaking?

**Mr. Fox:** Mr. Speaker, prior to the hon. gentleman's question I must say I had some difficulty following the language