

Hon. Mr. RALSTON: I said that the fullest information was, of course, available. I was only talking of the officials themselves. Nobody can deny that the officials can be put on the rack and asked any question, and they must answer any question. The files of the department are wide open. I was only talking of the spirit and attitude towards the officials. There is one critical attitude that can be taken, and the committee can be as critical as it desires, and that is for the good of the country: the attitude that the department have been wrong in this connection, or that this or that is a wrong interpretation of the law, or something like that. Then there is criticism on the ground of bad faith and things of that sort.

Hon. Mr. EDWARDS: Yes, that is alright.

Hon. Mr. RALSTON: I take it that there is no suggestion of bad faith, but that we are to get information for the improvement of the policy and administration of the department. I think that that information is due to the officials more for the reason, as my honourable friend, Dr. Edwards says, that they must answer any questions put to them. They cannot plead privilege and things of that sort, but I think the committee should be careful to establish an atmosphere which would bring with it the very best results.

Mr. McGIBBON: It strikes me that this is a rather peculiar introduction of this subject. Surely the minister is not trying to suggest that this committee is prejudicial to the officials, or anything of the kind. I do not know why he makes such a statement.

Hon. Mr. RALSTON: Because in the House and in the country the word "suspicion" has been constantly used.

Mr. McGIBBON: We are not responsible for the newspapers.

Hon. Mr. RALSTON: It is not only the newspapers, but in the House as well.

Hon. Mr. FORKE: I do not intend to take any prominent part in this unless I have to. But I want to say that as far as I am personally concerned, I will do everything I can to facilitate the work of the committee and give it all the information that is possible. Personally, I am as much interested as any member of this committee with regard to criticisms. Some of them in the House have been perfectly legitimate and alright. I can take my medicine. Some of them have not been very kind sometimes, but they have not hurt very much. After all, I have nothing to hide; bring it all out.

Mr. McGIBBON: It goes with the job.

Hon. Mr. FORKE: But I do hope that when this committee ends its deliberations they will be able to give me some concrete advice that will help me in administering the department of Immigration and Colonization. I want to tell you gentlemen that there has not been a speech made in the House of Commons that I have not watched for some constructive thought, that would help me in my work. Now, I do not want to speak in a derogatory sense, but I haven't got any.

W. J. EGAN, Deputy Minister of Immigration, called and sworn:—

Mr. CAHAN: I would suggest that Mr. Egan be asked to give us a general statement of the organization and operation of the Immigration department in about the same spirit as he would give it to a new minister coming in, who knew nothing about the department at all, and did not know what the general machinery and operations of the department are.

WITNESS: This is a fairly large order. I just don't know how quite to approach the proposition as suggested. I feel that I should not in any way assert a policy; I think that a declaration of policy should come from the minister. If I am allowed to pass over the policy proposition, then I can review the work of the department, and perhaps start in with British immigration. Out-

[Mr. W. J. Egan.]