

*Inquiries of the Ministry***CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION****ALLEGED PROVISION OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION TO SENATOR**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Reid Scott (Danforth): Mr. Speaker, I wanted to ask the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration a question. I wonder what steps the minister is taking to investigate the circumstances under which Senator Gélinas was supplied confidential information from the files of the department by Raymond Denis in the Stonehill case, as reported in the press.

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I cannot accept any such premise as that included in the question and so cannot answer it.

Mr. Speaker: Order. In my opinion that question, as phrased, is completely out of order. It is an assertion, an allegation.

[Later:]

Mr. Scott: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to ask a further question of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Is the minister aware that Raymond Denis has given testimony under oath to the effect that information from the files of his department was made available to Senator Gélinas—

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Some hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Pickersgill: I am rising on a point of order. Surely questions about proceedings before a royal commission which is sitting at this time should not be put until that commission has made its report.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair agrees with the last statement made by the minister.

Mr. Scott: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order raised by the Minister of Transport, the circumstances in relation to this evidence involve a matter which is in no way sub judice. The royal commission is investigating an entirely different matter, having been set up for an entirely different purpose. During the course of its inquiry sworn testimony has been given which appears to indicate a violation of the Official Secrets Act. I think we are entitled to ask the minister to take notice of this and to have an investigation made and report back to the house.

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, further to this question I would point out to the minister and to the house that I have already put on the order paper

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

question No. 2,899 referring to another matter with regard to which testimony was given before the Dorion commission. I submit that certainly not everything about which information becomes available and which has nothing to do with the main problem into which the commission is inquiring cannot be discussed until the report is received.

Mr. Scott: I should like to give notice to discuss this at ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, since the commissioner, Judge Dorion, is not called upon to decide this specific point, it seems to me that this question should be allowed and that an answer should be given.

In my opinion this problem does not concern the Dorion commission, because it is only an incident disclosed during the investigation. Since the matter depends much more on the minister's rather than on the investigators' judgment, I feel that the minister should answer this question.

[Text]

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that this is a very important point of order, I think I should mention that there is a rule of this house that any hon. member who chooses to make an assertion and then base a question on it has to take the responsibility in the house for the accuracy of the assertion.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, I am sure Your Honour will want to make a ruling, because this question has not been settled satisfactorily as yet. I believe Your Honour will want to take under advisement the question as to whether evidence given before the Dorion commission which is not related to the terms of reference under which that commission is operating can be the subject of questions asked in this house. The particular question raised by the hon. member for Danforth related to the Stonehill case, and nowhere under the terms of reference is Mr. Justice Dorion authorized to investigate the Stonehill case, unless the government decides to extend those terms of reference. Therefore I ask Your Honour if he will take under consideration whether questions regarding the Stonehill case are now to be declared sub judice, and not capable of being asked in this house. It seems to me that this is a rather important matter which ought to be clarified.