

*Supply—Justice*

discuss some of the aspects of it which come to my mind, and the real reason why members—admittedly mostly in the opposition, although we have had very helpful evidence of disquiet from the government benches as well—are disillusioned about the government's handling of this case.

Let us review just a couple of things to put the matter in perspective. When the minister was asked about an investigation he very promptly said no. When the Prime Minister was asked about an investigation into this case he said maybe. That was his intervention, and some of us thought that, in a statement on government policy covering the aspects of this case and really all security cases, he would come forth with a policy or method for handling these difficult situations in a manner which would fit into the Prime Minister's philosophy, which he expounds as being new politics.

Of course finally the Prime Minister said no to the suggestion; and the minister today in what I have to call just a weak apologia, also said no. Let me review one or two other things that have served to disillusion members about the government's handling of this case. First of all there were the terms used by the Department of External Affairs when it made its announcement about the request for the recalling of the Russians in question. Any newspaperman, I suggest, who is worth his salary, would have had no difficulty in tracing Spencer from the evidence propounded in that press release by the Department of External Affairs. That is of course exactly what happened. An enterprising newspaperman traced Spencer because of that department's release.

There is another aspect that was unpleasant to me, relating to the use of quite an extraordinary term in contemporary Canadian history. That term which was used is "non-nationals of Canada". This was a discrimination, and when I asked the Prime Minister about it he said: Well, this is perhaps because these innocent people come to this country and are duped or something by lures of money. It remains however that the government used this quite unnecessary and unpleasant appellation.

In spite of all the speeches that have been made during this debate the minister has never really told us the story about his feature presentation on the program "This Hour has 7 Days". He has skirted this subject. Many of us who watched the minister that night, and who have been interested

as this case has developed in parliament, have been waiting for his apology, if that is the word, about this extraordinary statement. One must remember that the minister is not a newspaperman. I have great respect for newspapermen. But the minister is a privy councillor charged with protecting the rights of citizens of this country, and he does not do anything privately in this or other areas of his ministerial responsibility. We call the minister to account today because he as the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General chose to use a very popular program on which to stigmatize Spencer. The Minister of Justice for Canada made this public identification on a program that has very wide popularity. I am told it has an audience of between two and a half and three million Canadians.

• (7:30 p.m.)

There are some people in this country who believe words, because they think words are precious things. Just because the Prime Minister of Canada does not lead the party to which I owe allegiance does not mean I do not pay some attention to what he says. I do not think this is a very startling revelation. When the Prime Minister of Canada discussed his new politics, I believed him. I thought, here is a man who believes what he says; he has had long experience in public life and perhaps in fact there is a new politics of Liberalism. Of course we have seen by this and other shoddy acts that those were just idle words.

I have not really any particular quarrel with the decision of the minister not to prosecute in the courts of the land. When I say that, Mr. Chairman, I would hope that this advice was taken after consultation with the law officers of the crown, which would be an innovation for this department in recent years. But I am assuming that this is now the custom in the department and the law officers have given this advice. I do not have too much quarrel with this. But surely the minister in accepting the recommendation that there be no prosecution is missing the point, the point being that the opposition has asked for a commission to judge the facts surrounding the public stigmatism of this man by the minister on a television program, and all the other events surrounding this matter.

There is one other matter which I should also like to clear up now. It was a rather extraordinary intervention by the member for Trois-Rivières and I think some public