

Supply—Justice

assuming office received from any member of the Canadian Bar Association, or on behalf of any member of the Canadian Bar Association, representations that seem to be in contravention of the ethics enunciated there? If so, has he in any respect given any work to any of these people as a result of representations of this kind?

Mr. Fulton: The answer to both parts of the question is no, with the possible exception of the case under discussion.

Mr. Regier: I cannot let the ministers statement go. He said that Mr. Freeman is carrying on a campaign. May I remind the minister that all of the correspondence reveals that Mr. Freeman, in a completely ethical manner, appealed to the government without success, I regret to say, for a period in excess of a year and a half to explain why he had been removed from the list of those eligible to act on behalf of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and all the answers he received over the whole 18 months indicated very clearly that the only reason he had been removed from the list was that he was not a Conservative and had not acted on behalf of the Tory party candidate.

Mr. Fulton: That is quite inaccurate. There were placed on the record this afternoon the reply directed to Mr. Freeman by my executive assistant and the reply of myself both of which explain that there are an adequate number of lawyers in St. Catharines to do the work available and, further, that since one of Mr. Freeman's revealed interests in being nominated as an agent of C.M.H.C. was that he had clients who had loans from C.M.H.C. we felt this was an incompatible position, and that was another reason for our refusal to place him on the list.

Mr. Regier: I think the dates of the correspondence will reveal that this was only an example used by Mr. Freeman to prove a point away on in the discussions and the minister is on very weak ground because he cannot claim and has not even attempted to claim that the lawyers who are on the list do not also have clients who have a nodding acquaintance with Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. I think that the letters of the hon. member for Lincoln completely expose all the contentions of the minister in this regard. In other words, if you will change your mind about me I might change my mind about you and you might still get on the list.

I appeal to the minister to end this nonsense, to be as honest as a number of other members of the government have been and to announce here and now that in his department at least no pork barrel politics are going to be tolerated. I indicated earlier that it is

not only this lawyer in southern Ontario who is involved. During the dinner hour I read reams of correspondence from lawyers in the city of Ottawa confirming what I said before six o'clock, that when the Tories took office they abolished the old list and established a new one consisting only of Conservatives.

The minister has not yet said why Mr. Freeman was removed from the list of eligible lawyers. I am not concerned with him being read out of the Ontario bar association. If the Ontario bar association wants to be that reactionary and silly that is entirely up to them. All I can say is that all the mutterings and beefings of the Tory backbenchers about unions will be completely exposed as a farce if the Ontario bar association shows itself to be the most reactionary of all unions in the whole Dominion of Canada.

Mr. Freeman is appealing to the parliament of Canada on the basis of his right as a citizen of Canada to be placed on the eligible list. He is not asking for any business or any guarantee of remuneration. The minister may laugh and in the eyes of the Tories this may be a laughing matter. After all, they put on a great big circus show in the election financed by millions of dollars. This man is appealing on the basis of his right as a citizen to be placed on the eligible list. The minister is denying him that right and the minister has not yet put forward one single argument as to why this man was removed from the list of lawyers in the province of Ontario who are eligible to do this work. I should like to ask the minister to explain why this man was removed from the list. The minister now claims that the fact that Mr. Freeman has revealed this situation to the opposition obviously shows that he is ineligible. To my mind the fact that this man has revealed the situation to opposition members shows that he is concerned with a bill of rights for Canadians, and any bill of rights that the Prime Minister will introduce will be a farce if there is going to be a continuation of pork barrel politics.

Mr. Graftey: Pompous indignation.

Mr. Denis: Mr. Chairman, we have had a rather lengthy discussion about Mr. Freeman's eligibility. If Mr. Freeman had no freedom of eligibility, surely we have freedom of speech here, and one can come to the conclusion that Mr. Freeman had freedom more or less so far as eligibility is concerned. To me it looks like it was a question of patronage. What the hon. member has just said goes to prove to the committee that before the election those who are now in power criticized the former government for patronage but now they are doing the same, if not worse as the previous government.