

profession, there arise differences of opinion; in his profession, on theological questions; and I understand that the same is the case with doctors. There can be no question that lawyers can nearly always find ways of distinguishing one thing from another, but there are some propositions on which all lawyers will agree, as there are some propositions on which all ministers and all doctors will agree; and this is one of those propositions upon which, I believe, the whole legal fraternity will agree.

Mr. KNOWLES: May I ask the hon. member a question? If that is the case, why is it that the then minister of national revenue, who I believe is a member of the legal profession, felt that this act as it now stands prevented him from giving the information for which I asked in the house?

Mr. MAYBANK: Well, I do not recall the incident to which my hon. friend has referred; and in view of the fact that he is not quoting the words of the minister I do not know whether he is correctly portraying what the minister said.

Mr. KNOWLES: I will give the hon. member several examples. One is to be found on page 2929 of *Hansard* for May 24, 1943.

Mr. MAYBANK: Yes, I know, but even so the hon. member may be a long way from accurately portraying what the minister said. I have no means of knowing. I should point out to him that if he desires to show what it was that the minister said on page so-and-so of *Hansard*, the best evidence of what the minister said will be the document itself, namely *Hansard*, and not a mere reference by him to a page number. I can quite understand that the minister may have said that he felt precluded by reason of the act from giving information. That is very natural; he would feel precluded from giving information by reason of the act and he would feel precluded from giving information by reason of the spirit of the act. But that is not the same thing as to say that he felt precluded from giving information by this section of the act. That is the point I was making; and I cannot see any sense in passing the proposed amendment, which would be utterly without effect and useless. That was the first point I was making. I am not saying at all that my learned friend—I hope there will be no objection taken to my having fallen into legal terminology and having called him “learned friend” across the floor. There was no offence intended.

Mr. KNOWLES: And none taken.

[Mr. Maybank.]

Mr. MAYBANK: I know it would be a most terrible come-down for a preacher to be called a lawyer.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. HOMUTH: It would be far worse if you ever called a lawyer a preacher.

Mr. MAYBANK: It is certainly far from any intention of mine to insult. I say that this particular section, and that is all I have been arguing about, is not being amended to any purpose by that which is set down in the bill. But in those remarks I have not quite completed my answer to the hon. gentleman.

His remark when he asked if I would permit a question was this: “Well, supposing what you say is correct; how does it come about that the minister made such and such an answer on such and such a day?”, although he has not quoted the answer that the minister made or tied it down to any particular section of the law. Of course I might be able to hazard some opinion as to why the minister made the statement in the manner in which he did, but I hardly feel called upon to do so to support the argument I am making. I am quite willing to agree with the hon. gentleman that the ways of minister of the crown are very often inscrutable, and the exact reason why the minister may have made a statement in a certain form is something I could not undertake to answer, not having a sufficient degree of clairvoyance for the purpose. I cannot say why the minister made a statement in a certain way, but I am quite confident as to the correctness of what I have said with reference to the amendment in this manner of this particular section, no matter what the minister said. While I cannot unscrew the inscrutability of ministers of the crown, nevertheless I am quite confident that if, as, and when this amendment is passed absolutely nothing will have been accomplished. For that reason I would be bound to vote against something which I believe would be a nullity after it was passed. That is about the sole reason at the moment that I would advance for declaring myself definitely against the proposed amendment.

So far as the general idea of opening up records—

Mr. KNOWLES: Mr. Speaker, I wonder, before the hon. member wanders around some more in search of another point, if he would mind my reading the quotation which he said I was not giving? To have the record clear, I refer to *Hansard* of May 24, 1943, at page