

The Address—Mr. D. F. Brown

Mr. Speaker: Order. It may be that by saying that he apologizes the hon. member for Essex West may feel that it is tantamount to withdrawing, but it is not. I think the hon. member will be just as agreeable and say: "I withdraw the expression."

Mr. Brown (Essex West): May I therefore clarify my position, Mr. Speaker. On page 88—

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Brown (Essex West): —of this debate will be found the speech of the hon. member for Hastings-Frontenac. He said:

I hope that all purchasers of Chrysler products will take notice of the fact that this company makes no warranty of any kind and that the poor purchaser must look to the dealer for any remedy which he can get.

Now, I do not know what you call it; it may not be blackmail. If it is not blackmail, I apologize and I withdraw.

Mr. Green: On a point of order,—

Mr. Speaker: Order; the hon. member has done more than withdraw, he has apologized and withdrawn.

Mr. Green: No.

Mr. Speaker: I distinctly heard the hon. member who has just resumed his seat say: "I apologize and I withdraw." Now, that should be satisfactory.

Mr. Green: No; he prefaced that withdrawal by a condition, if such and such were the case. No hon. member can rise in this house and accuse another of committing legal blackmail. That is what the hon. member for Essex West has done with regard to the hon. member for Hastings-Frontenac. I ask Your Honour to insist that it be withdrawn without any condition.

Mr. Brown (Essex West): I ask the hon. member what "blackmail" is.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Whenever an hon. member uses offensive words, especially with regard to an hon. member who is not in his seat, it is certainly in order for the Chair to ask the hon. member who has thus uttered those offensive words to withdraw. In doing so he is also entitled to explain why he used the words which he felt justified in using, and that I understood was what the hon. member for Essex West was doing. If he has attached a condition to his withdrawal, I do not think he meant to and he should not have. I know the hon. member will withdraw the words that are considered offensive.

Mr. Brown (Essex West): I do not know exactly the meaning of the word "black-

mail". Perhaps the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra can help me.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Let us not go into the definition of words. I am asking the hon. member to withdraw the expression "legal blackmail" inasmuch as it refers to the hon. member for Hastings-Frontenac.

Mr. Brown (Essex West): Can I say this, Mr. Speaker? I abhor the practice of legal coercion of contractual rights of litigants or prospective litigants in this house. Does that answer the question?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ferguson: Legal blackmail—

Mr. Speaker: I notice with pleasure that the house is in good humour, but nevertheless the words "legal blackmail" have been used in reference to the hon. member for Hastings-Frontenac (Mr. White) and I must ask the hon. member for Essex West (Mr. Brown) to withdraw them.

Mr. Brown (Essex West): I cannot leave a vacuum; I must have a substitute, and if someone will suggest a substitute I shall be glad to accept it.

An hon. Member: Withdraw.

Mr. Speaker: It would be quite easy for the hon. member to simply rise and say, "I withdraw those words."

Mr. Brown (Essex West): I withdraw any offence there may be to the hon. member. If the word "blackmail" is offensive to my hon. friend, I withdraw it.

Mr. Knowles: Withdraw "legal" too.

An hon. Member: Make it illegal.

Mr. Speaker: I do not think we ought to spend too much time on this matter. I think it is clear that the hon. member does not wish to offend the hon. member for Hastings-Frontenac. While I am on my feet may I say that great latitude has been afforded to hon. members during the debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne. In previous years when amendments have been moved the debate has been kept relevant to the amendments. However, by practice the discussion has become wide and varied. But normally the debate should remain within the realm of public affairs. I hope that the incident which prompted the hon. member for Essex West to rise tonight is not going to be the beginning of a series of speeches having to do with matters not within the realm of public affairs.

Mr. Brown (Essex West): Do I understand that when speeches of this nature are made we are not permitted to reply?