

## THE SENATE

Tuesday, February 13, 1990

The Senate met at 2 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers.

[*Translation*]

### QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

**Hon. Michel Cogger:** Honourable senators, I wish to address the Senate briefly on a question of personal privilege.

Last November 7, I asked this House to suspend the work of the committee which had been set up at my request some time before, while awaiting the outcome of an RCMP investigation on me.

I then submitted that the House of Commons was too partisan, that the Senate was probably a more suitable place and that in the final analysis, the RCMP was no doubt the most impartial, professional and non-partisan arbiter one could find. Unfortunately, today I am forced to admit that the last part of this statement showed great naïveté.

My opinion has changed considerably since then, honourable senators, because I discovered in the meantime that the RCMP was determined to destroy me, no more and no less.

One Paul Vidosa, a former RCMP employee, told journalists and my lawyer that he was given the job of tying me to a money-laundering ring when the RCMP, buy its own admission, had no reason to believe that I was involved in any criminal activity. By the way, when Mr. Vidosa approached me, he said he had been referred by our colleague Senator De Bané, whom he had first consulted, no doubt to give himself a cover.

Furthermore, I knew for six months that the RCMP had tried to recruit Pierre Ducros, a Montreal businessman, to entrap me and two other senators.

Four members of this House were thus unknowingly involved in this policy conspiracy.

Entrapment, odious and repugnant as it is, remains an accepted method of police investigation which is recognized by the courts, provided that there are "reasonable grounds". For lack of reasonable grounds, the above-mentioned actions are nothing more or less than criminal plots by members of the RCMP against me.

[*English*]

Honourable senators, on January 24 and again on February 6, my lawyer, Maître Pateras, wrote to the Solicitor General. His letters have not been acknowledged yet. In those letters Mr. Pateras raised three questions.

First, he asked the Solicitor General to reconsider his decision to let the RCMP investigate itself. Second, he asked Mr. Blais to give him an assurance that the people who were "out

to get me" were not the same people who were investigating me. Indeed, my lawyer, Maître Pateras, has been informed that Inspector Beauchemin is involved in the investigation concerning me, and I was told by Mr. Ducros that Mr. Beauchemin is the very one who tried to enlist him to incriminate me. Third, Maître Pateras asked the Solicitor General to undertake to make the report of the RCMP public.

It has now been three weeks since these allegations were made and three weeks since Maître Pateras wrote to Mr. Blais. Honourable senators, I do not and cannot have confidence in the ability or, more particularly, the will of the RCMP to undergo self-discipline. I shall explain why. The dirty tricks which we now hear about that have recently come to light did so not because, all of a sudden, the RCMP was up front, straightforward and candid; not because the RCMP had a change of heart or decided to mend its ways. No. Those dirty tricks came to light because, in one instance, a disgruntled former employee decided to come forward and, in the other instance, the facts were as Mr. Ducros told me.

Honourable senators, where do you think the next episode will come from? It will come from another person who used to be active in the "dirty tricks" department as far back as 1985 and who has decided to speak out. That person recently spoke with my lawyer.

When the RCMP informed the Solicitor General, who then informed the House in early November of last year, that they were starting an investigation of me, was that true? Or is it not simply a fact that they were out to "get me" all along, as Mr. Vidosa, their ex-employee, now says?

Does anyone here seriously believe that the RCMP does not leak information to the press when it serves its purpose? Why should one believe that the RCMP is now going to clean up its act and voluntarily expose its own wrongdoings? If the RCMP was any good at self-regulating, how could it let these things happen in the first place? Or, when the incidents did happen, how could the RCMP let them go undiscovered or undisclosed for a whole year or, in the case of the other informant, for nearly five years?

Meanwhile, the RCMP keeps investigating my role as a senator, as if nothing had happened and as if it was "business as usual." I submit, honourable senators, that they continue to carry on an investigation the results of which will be highly questionable, because the investigators have shown the highest degree of bias and prejudice—indeed, they may be guilty of criminal conspiracy.

Honourable senators, Inspector Erlich instructed Mr. Vidosa to help the RCMP catch Quebec MPs because, as he said, "they are all crooks anyway, there will be plenty of work