

*Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward* I want to say at once that the Government is not going to be a prosecutor against anybody.

*Mr. Allen* I only want to know the nature of the procedure. Mr. Hine has had to come up and make his charges before this Committee, and I think that if there are other charges to be made they should be made in an equally open way. If any other person has other charges to make, let him make them in an open and straightforward way, and let him have the responsibility of doing it as Mr. Hine has done. That is fair and I think we should have an assurance on that from the Prime Minister. I do not know what the Prime Minister means in his reference to dead men. I do not know that there is any charge against a dead man. I hope no charge will be made against dead men myself, but I think the remark had some meaning, and that it should be made more clear.

*Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward* I want to point out, in reference to jurisdiction, that in asking for the appointment of two Supreme Court Judges I meant that the matter should be investigated at once. If this Committee sat here, with counsel representing both sides, hearing these charges, it is problematical whether the proceedings would be concluded before the end of the session. I shall have to inquire into the power of Judges to carry out as a Commission what is the request of Parliament, and if there is any doubt I will see that Parliament shall have an opportunity of legislating so that it shall be done. As far as my reference to dead men is concerned, I am certain that no member of the Administration in the past or the Administration of the present has done anything wrong in connection with these matters. What I said was this: that this is an important matter, which not only reflected upon living men but upon dead men, and I was of the opinion that it should be inquired into by an absolutely impartial tribunal.

*Mr. Massey* It is now proposed, and I have no doubt it will be agreed to, that the charges made by Mr. Hine should be referred to two Judges of the Supreme Court. We do not want to send them to any Commission or Royal Commission which will be in the nature of a fishing expedition, and if there are any charges to be brought forward we should have them brought forward in the same manner as Mr. Hine's. With regard to the statement made by Mr. Hine when speaking in the House on the 29th September, Mr. Hine says, as reported in *Hansard*—I need not give the whole speech—in concluding his speech, 'I am prepared to name the men implicated at once if the Prime Minister will give me an assurance here and now that he will set up two Judges of the Supreme Court as the tribunal.' I do not think anything could be more definite than that. He says he is prepared to state the names of the men implicated at once if the Prime Minister will give him the assurance that he will set up two Judges of the Supreme Court.

*Mr. Buchanan* I would ask the Right Hon. Sir Joseph Ward, in view of the period of the session, whether there is any possibility of the Judges being able to report before the close of the session?

*Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward* I propose, after this matter has been referred to the House, to write to the Chief Justice and ask him to have two Judges appointed, and also to try and fix the time.

*Mr. Buchanan*: The earliest possible time.

*Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward*: Yes.

*Mr. Massey* Has the Right Hon. Sir Joseph Ward any information to give to the Committee with regard to other charges that may be formulated? I do not think we should go without knowing that. We have some charges before the Committee, and I think we ought to have them all. I think we are entitled to know what the other charges are.

*Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward* I am not in the position of a prosecutor of any other member of the House, and I am not going to be put in the position of a prosecutor by this Committee. I want to make that perfectly clear. I do not propose to make any charges against anybody, but I have been informed that under certain circumstances there may be other charges.

Motion put, "That the Chairman report to the House the Committee's recommendation, together with the minutes of proceedings."

Motion agreed to.

*Mr. Massey* As it is quite certain that it will be necessary to call a number of witnesses, I should like an expression of opinion as to the expenses of these witnesses—whether, in the event of witnesses being summoned, they would have to pay their own expenses, or whether in the ordinary way their expenses would be paid.

*Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward* That would be a matter for the Judges to deal with. I could not make a suggestion to them in regard to a matter of that sort.

*Mr. Allen* We have power as a Committee to pay witnesses, and when we summon them we have to pay their expenses. I do not know what the position in connection with Judges would be with regard to the payment of the expenses before the tribunal we are about to set up.

*Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward* We cannot dictate to the Judges.

*Mr. Allen* The House referred this matter to us to inquire into, and we had power to pay witnesses' expenses.

*Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward* We should not have had in the first instance if the resolution had been agreed to to appoint two Judges, and as a member of this Committee I cannot in my official position undertake to do anything of that kind.

On rising, members of the Committee had a desultory discussion as to when the Chairman should report to the House, and it was understood that he should report in the afternoon.