

Morality in Government

Speaker this, as reported at page 11963 of *Hansard*, March 4, 1965:

I think all members of parliament, whether government or opposition, only ask for a fair chance. After consultation with your officials, Mr. Speaker, who deal with the order paper and questions of procedure, I now put before you for your advice the question whether there is a clear cut case here of collusion of the kind that would attack the traditional parliamentary rights of members of parliament.

This point of privilege raised by the member for Port Arthur was followed by the member for Winnipeg South Centre who goes on to say this at page 11964 of *Hansard*, March 4, 1965:

But the problem raised by the hon. member for Port Arthur is much wider than that. Surely it is no function of the Speaker to ascertain whether or not access to files has been made available to private members of the house. I do not know what sort of investigation Mr. Speaker could carry on in that regard. If I understood the accusation of the hon. member for Port Arthur, it was based more on that ground rather than simply the technical arrangement of questions on the order paper.

Then the member for Winnipeg South Centre went on to say that he would like to move a motion, and there were other parts of the debate which I have a feeling will be referred to before this debate is over. So here we have, on March 4, 1965, a member of this house, who I think we will all agree has been very interested in the institution of parliament, questioning a practice that was becoming self-evident.

Now almost a year to the day later the same member of parliament, who is no longer with us, publishes an article of which I am going to read a part.

Mr. Lewis: He is fully alive.

Mr. Hamilton: When I say he is no longer with us I mean on the floor of this house.

Mr. Fisher's article appears in the *Toronto Telegram* of Tuesday, March 8, 1966 and reads:

At first blush, the manner in which Justice Minister Cardin dropped the Monsignor case into the house record made it seem almost accidental. The mistaken spelling or pronunciation, Munzinger for Monsignor, supports this. But it could not have been that casual.

Before Mr. Cardin spoke, Mr. Diefenbaker had said during remarks on the Spencer case " . . . the time has come for a full and complete investigation. I want to go back; I want to cover the period from 1944 onward."

Remember that this was early Friday afternoon before we had any threat about the Monsignor case from Mr. Cardin. Shortly after saying this, Mr. Diefenbaker remarked: "Let us assure that our security shall be preserved. Let us go into the

[Mr. Hamilton.]

matter. Why do you not do it? Don't go around telling members of the press gallery: 'If we were to tell what we know, we would be devastating.' I say to you, let us bring out the facts. Establish a royal commission. I want to go back to 1944-45 to see whether our security is what it should be."

So the press gallery had been told something. What was it?

It won't surprise anyone that members of the press are always being given tips and leads, especially by a politician or worker for one party about another.

The hon. member who has made an interjection should remember that one of his predecessors sitting in his seat was in very serious trouble and is now out of this house.

Mr. Teillet: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member wishes to threaten me, let him deal with facts.

Mr. Hamilton: I believe, Mr. Speaker, we need only to regard where this comes from and let it pass.

Let me go on to quote again from Mr. Fisher's article, where he says:

In this sense the reporter becomes the broker or agent for the interest that gave him his lead. Of course, he is not consciously such an agent because his main concern is to dig out a story for the public.

I am new enough around the press gallery to have a strong curiosity about how the news process works. I notice the people who are not reporters who drop into the gallery room—the MP's, the executive assistants, and the public relations men.

Several weeks ago it struck me that one chap, medium sized, glasses, rather scholarly, seemed to drift through the quarters a lot.

He was a familiar face around the buildings but I had never placed him directly. I asked a colleague who he was and the answer was that he was a former executive assistant to George McIlraith, Minister of Public Works. His name was Hugh Lawford. He is now attached to the Privy Council office and working around the Prime Minister's office.

● (9:30 p.m.)

Mr. Stewart: May I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker? I should like to know if the hon. member is assuming responsibility for the accuracy of the information he is putting before the house.

Mr. Hamilton: I think the necessary action can be taken if this is inaccurate, as the hon. member knows.

Mr. Teillet: The hon. member was making certain assertions a moment ago, Mr. Speaker, with regard to me. I should like him to specify those.

Mr. Hamilton: I think the success of my remarks is self-evident.