

*Morality in Government*

We have serious problems and those problems demand our combined intelligence and our combined ingenuity. Surely those who have an interest in the continuity of this place feel that there are large problems which we should be considering. One of those that I look upon as being very real is how to improve the control that parliament should, if it is to fulfil its prime mission, be able to exercise over the general administration. This is a difficult concept to discuss, but it is discussed in a most interesting way in a book entitled "Modern Capitalism," by Andrew Shonfield. Obviously our parliament is not unique in its search for a formula which would enable it to adapt itself to the modern world. In the United Kingdom, France, Sweden and in the United States the search for better methods continues.

We representatives, I suggest, must re-equip ourselves and our system so we can talk on equal terms with the great body of administrators who intervene increasingly in our daily lives. Let it be clearly understood here that I am not launching a discussion on the public service as an institution, because I believe Canada is tremendously well served by our public service. The concept I have in mind is much broader than this. As Shonfield says:

—the central question is how far an active government wielding great and varied economic power, intervening in the detailed conduct of private business affairs, discriminating between one citizen and another on the basis of subtle and complex judgments of the community's needs ten or twenty years ahead, driving bargains with particular interest groups as administrative convenience dictates, can be subjected to effective democratic control?

These are things on which we should be spending our time. As Shonfield says:

—a nation which is unable to establish effective democratic control over the processes of modern government faces one of two alternatives. Either it must accept that the liberties of its citizens will be diminished or it must forego the great material benefits which can be made to flow from the operation of the active interventionist state of today.

● (3:50 p.m.)

What more acceptable challenge could be imagined for the parliament of 1966 than devising a formula which would recognize our traditional anxiety about the individual citizen and his liberty and our concern that parliament remain an effective and relevant instrument for the conduct of public business? How do we make sure that the member of parliament plays a meaningful role in the business of government? How too do we

ensure the protection of the individual citizen against the arbitrary exercise of an ever more extensive public power? The ombudsman of Scandinavia, the Conseil d'État of France, the Swedish principle of the goldfish bowl, are all ways in which various other countries have begun to try to solve this fundamental question.

But, Mr. Speaker, rather than deal with these affairs, we seem to be dealing in this country with quite a different issue. We ignore the fundamental problem, to our peril I suggest. Because we do, many thoughtful Canadians have been deeply troubled, in fact they have become alarmed, at the low estate to which government and parliament have fallen of late. There is no need here to catalogue a list of the smirches on the escutcheon of parliament, but let us examine the events surrounding the evidence given at the so-called Spence inquiry by the commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who disclosed that late in November 1964, within days of charges having been made in this chamber by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), the Prime Minister asked the commissioner whether there were any files involving members of parliament in wrongdoing.

The fact that the Prime Minister asked the commissioner whether there were any files involving any member of parliament of any party in matters of a scandalous nature over the past ten years is evidence—evidence which has been published abroad, and quite properly—which shows how proper was the concern of many people in this country that this inquiry should be a public inquiry. There really need not have been any other single piece of evidence to prove this essential point. The commissioner told the Prime Minister about the Munsinger file and a summary of it was provided. That summary was kept in cold storage, if that can be possible in this context, by the Prime Minister until the commissioner last month asked that it be sent back.

What a sinister abuse of the rules of law. What a tragic and dangerous misuse of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. What a cynical attitude to the constitutional role of a member of parliament and his obligation to exercise independence in debate, unfettered by any threat or improper pressure.

I shall make no attempt to try to anticipate the outcome of this inquiry because that would be improper. I shall not comment upon the manner in which it is being conducted