

*Study on Manpower*

Members need simply look at the answers to questions in the orders for returns filed for my colleague the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Skoberg) to see how in case after case the government has given the contract for such studies to some company without calling for a public tender.

I do not know what particular qualifications these companies and individuals have but I am suspicious enough and have been in politics long enough to be reasonably certain that none of these people are antagonistic to the Liberal party or to the Liberal government. As a citizen of Canada and as a member of parliament I resent these substantial amounts of money being paid to people partly at least because of political patronage. I say it is not only wrong but immoral for this to be done.

Let us look at how these things are done. Let us take, for example, the Post Office Department. The Post Office Department, to say the least, is in a mess. Never in my years of public service which now go back almost 25 years have I seen a report made by an impartial person so critical of a department as the three reports made by the adjudicator about the workings of the Post Office Department. Mr. Martin's reports are a real condemnation of the operation of the Post Office Department. The department is in a mess. Hon. members have been trying to tell the minister that since he undertook this job. What has happened since the minister has taken over the department? He has hired three or four consulting firms to prepare studies. Who lays out the terms of reference for these firms? Who tells them what to study and look at? The officials of the Post Office Department who permitted the department to get in the mess it is in. So it is those who have made the mess who instruct the consultants to undertake studies which will of course gloss over, because they know what ought not to be looked at, the mess which exists.

Then we have the final indignity. We are told repeatedly that these studies which are done for the government and which are paid for by the people of Canada who may or may not be Liberals—and more than 50 per cent of them did not vote Liberal in the last election—are private and confidential and belong to the minister and can only be tabled and made public if the minister so desires. It is my experience with Liberal ministers that they do not usually desire that these studies be made public, so they become essentially the private property of the government and

[Mr. Orlikow.]

the minister. I say that this is wrong in principle and that it involves a principle which the people of Canada increasingly will refuse to support.

• (5:10 p.m.)

Let me again direct the attention of this government and its ministers to the election which took place just a few days ago in the province of Manitoba. One of the important issues in that election was a large power development project on the Nelson river being financed jointly by the federal and provincial governments.

One of the problems which the hydroelectric system of Manitoba and the government faced involved the relocation of some 600 Indian and Métis people. It was proposed to move them from where they had been living quite well at South Indian Lake. The government of Manitoba and the hydro system commissioned a large number of studies into all aspects of what this move would mean in financial costs, social problems and so on. Despite all the requests by not only members of the legislature of all parties but by a university professor and other people concerned, the government of Manitoba refused completely to make public the studies that had been made.

The leader of the provincial New Democratic party will be the premier of Manitoba next week. He promised and has reiterated his promise since the election that all these studies will be made public so the people of Manitoba can know what were the findings and the recommendations, not the expurgated version which the former government of Manitoba tried to foist on them. That was a very important factor in the election campaign and in the election of our party as the government.

I suggest to the government of Canada that it get off its high horse and stop thinking it has some God-given right to be the government. It should stop thinking it will always be the government of Canada. There will come a time—I do not know whether it will be next week, three years from now or even eight years—when the Liberal party will no longer be the government. This happened in 1957. They will again be in the opposition and when that time comes I presume they will have the same desire as those of us now in the opposition to look at the documents which are prepared for the government in relation to problems such as those facing the people of Manitoba. I suggest to the government that it