

*Legal Assistance*

What is the Government of Canada doing to stand up on behalf of these Canadians who were the victims of these terrible experiments? The Conservative Government appointed a former Conservative Member of Parliament from Nova Scotia to conduct a study into the implications of this particular matter. But that study was nothing less than a complete whitewash. He came to the conclusion that there was no proof that anyone was damaged by the experiments. In fact, in arriving at his conclusion he did not even speak to a single victim of the experiments. He said that the Canadian Government had no responsibility toward these victims. We fundamentally disagree.

• (1210)

We believe that the Government of Canada should release all the information it possesses to the victims of those experiments to assist them in their lawsuit against the CIA in the United States. We are also insisting that Canada should financially assist the victims of these brainwashing experiments. For some time we have been waiting for the Government to live up to the promise it made, that at the very least it would help these people pay for their legal expenses in bringing action against the CIA.

It is thanks to the tremendous dedication, courage, and unflinching commitment of their United States attorney, Joseph Rauh, that this action is still alive before the United States courts. But the Canadians who are pursuing this action are still waiting for the Government to live up to its promise to assist them financially in pursuing their lawsuit.

I put a question to the Minister of Justice in June, and the Minister stated that he was in the process of consulting, looking at this matter, and that he hoped to be able to come forward with some concrete results in the very near future. That was four months ago, and still no action has been taken on the part of the Government.

I wish to link this to the Bill before the House at this time, and to ask the Government, whether the Prime Minister of Canada said to his good friend, Ronald Reagan, look, Ronnie, we are going to give you some new powers under the Mutual Legal Assistance Act, but your Government, and your intelligence agency, the CIA, is still refusing to recognize its responsibility to compensate the victims of experiments by the CIA in Canada during the late 1950s? Did our Prime Minister stand up for these Canadians? Did he say that if the United States wanted these new powers, it was not going to receive them unless the Americans accepted their moral, ethical, and legal responsibility to compensate these victims?

We do not know what happened at the Shamrock conference. We do know that the victims of these experiments have so far received absolutely no assistance whatsoever from the Government of Canada. Until the Government comes to grips with this serious question and recognizes its responsibility to our citizens who are the victims of these brainwashing experiments by the CIA without their consent, why should we

co-operate in granting new powers to the Government of the United States?

Let us say to the American authorities, the Attorney General of the United States, and the President of the United States, if you wish these new powers it is about time that you took action to assist us. That is the type of hard-headed, tough negotiating that we believe should have been undertaken, and that we believe was not undertaken before this Act was brought forward.

It may well be that this is another little bone that is being tossed to the American Government as part of the price that we pay for free trade in Canada, together with the legislation on generic drugs, and the Minister of Communications knuckling under on the Broadcasting Act. I could go on with a litany of areas in which the Government has caved in to the Americans. We are afraid that perhaps this Bill is part of that pattern of knuckling under to United States pressure. We do not believe we should be giving in to that pressure. We certainly believe that Canada should be standing up for Canadians.

There are a number of other areas of concern with respect to this legislation. First, I wish to point out that the Liberal spokesperson indicated that the Liberal Party intends to support this Bill in principle. Once again the Liberals and the Conservatives are in bed together on a matter that fundamentally affects the rights and sovereignty of Canadians. The Liberal justice critic said that this Bill is simply implementing what is presently being done informally. Quite obviously the Liberal justice critic has not read the Bill, if that is the position that he has taken. There are at least two significant elements of this Bill which do extend the powers of the United States investigative authorities.

The new Canada-United States treaty which would come into effect as a result of this Bill would allow the collection of evidence in Canada by United States police at a far earlier stage than is presently permitted. Presently under Canadian law the United States enforcement agencies are only permitted to seek Canadian co-operation in the gathering of evidence after charges have been laid, or after a trial has begun in the United States. The Prime Minister is now saying, come on in even before charges have been laid. We will allow you to investigate, and to use all of the powers in this new Act under this new treaty at the investigation stage. That is a significant change. It is not just putting into effect something which is informally taking place now, because if it is informally taking place now Canadian laws are being broken.

Another element in which this changes the law, and not just putting into effect a law which is already utilized in practice, as the Liberal justice critic has suggested, is the extent to which currently Canadian legislation denies American police access to search warrants for wholly foreign offences which are committed in the United States. This law would also change that.