Legal Assistance

However, that is not what happened for so many years in the United States. In the 40 or more years that Herbert Hoover was the Director of the FBI, because of his concept of what constituted communism and whom he believed to be communist, all kinds of information, not just about American citizens but about citizens of many other countries, was leaked by the FBI and perhaps by the CIA when it suited its purposes to media people, Congressmen and Senators.

• (1540)

I do not intend to go through the entire record, but Mr. Norman became a victim of U.S. McCarthyism. His loyalties were questioned. He was accused not only of having been a communist but of having continued to be a communist. In fact, he was accused of being a spy. That allegation made publicly in the United States at meetings of congressional and senatorial committees was of course looked into by Canadian authorities.

I am certain that when Mr. Pearson was our Secretary of State for External Affairs and when he was the Prime Minister, he had the opportunity, the right and the ability to look at the files, and I am certain he exercised that ability. I am certain as well that if Mr. Pearson had any reason to believe that Mr. Norman was all or any of these things of which he was being accused, Mr. Pearson would have taken decisive action. Of course, no action was taken by the Canadian Government because no action was required.

However, these allegations, false accusations and innuendoes were spread so widely that they adversely affected the ability of Mr. Norman to do his work. They affected so adversely his whole life that eventually he committed suicide while serving his country as our representative in Egypt.

That is what happened in the past. I am not saying that I am certain it will happen in the future. However, it can happen and I believe that the provisions of this Bill give our security agencies and the Government a power which could be misused, either wittingly or unwittingly.

I want to take a moment to thank my colleague from Vancouver for his very kind words and for his very detailed and moving description of the mistreatment of nine Canadians, of whom my wife is one, by experiments conducted in Montreal at the Allan Memorial Institute, experiments which went a long way toward destroying or certainly making difficult the lives of the more than 50 people who were involved in those experiments. That is just one illustration of what a security agency acting without supervision and without any real principles can do.

I worry a great deal about what can happen in the future based on the experience we have had in the past with our American friends. My colleague from Thunder Bay discussed possible problems that could arise in our relationship with the Government of India. I am sure the same questions could be asked about our possible relationships with many other countries. For all these reasons, it is my intention to vote against this Bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to have an opportunity to say a few words on Bill C-58. I must say at the outset—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order, please. I called for questions and comments. The Hon. Member is not questioning or commenting. Therefore, if there are no questions or comments, the Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap (Mr. Riis) has the floor on debate.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, I suppose I could have used that Standing Order since I do not plan to say much on Bill C-58 in order to allow it to proceed to committee as quickly as possible.

There are obviously a number of serious shortcomings attached to Bill C-58, and it is for that reason that we have been encouraged to co-operate and to facilitate the consideration of this Bill at this stage so that the legislative committee can hear the appropriate witnesses with the appropriate expertise to improve the Bill. I sense a willingness on all sides of the House to improve the legislation. Some serious errors have already been brought to the attention of Members of the House.

Basically, Bill C-58 is an Act to provide for the implementation of treaties for mutual legal assistance in criminal matters and to amend the Criminal Code, the Crown Liability Act and the Immigration Act, 1976. I want to say at the outset that I oppose this Bill in its present form for a whole number of reasons. Some of them have been mentioned already and, as the debate continues, some of the more technical concerns will be brought to the attention of the legislative committee and presumably the appropriate amendments will be moved.

I think it pays to look at the background of this legislation since this is the stage when we have an opportunity to debate the principle of the Bill. For that reason, I think it is appropriate that we look at the motivation behind Bill C-58.

Of course, we go back to the famous Shamrock Summit at which the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Mulroney) and the President of the United States met in Quebec City to sing When Irish Eyes are Smiling and to come to some agreements on the need for free trade negotiations. At that time, the President made some requests of the Prime Minister, and this Bill basically flows out of the request that the United States be given authority to extend powers of investigation into Canada beyond the existing laws. I think this is the result of one more of the ongoing demands that President Reagan made to the Prime Minister of Canada in order to open the door to some free trade negotiations. It is essentially another concession.

Bill C-58 is a very serious concession. It does not allow only countries like the United States to carry on investigations in