

actions are to be defended or repudiated and from whom information is to be sought.

That is the solution which C. Marshall feels has been accepted by parliamentary democracies. He cites no less an authority than Sir Anthony Eden as follows:

... thus clearly indicating his officials and not himself as the agents of the mischief. Moreover where action is taken of which the Minister disapproves and has no prior knowledge 'there is' said the Home Secretary, 'no obligation on the part of the Minister to endorse what he believes to be wrong, or to defend what are clearly shown to be errors of his officers'.

Herbert Morrison, in his book "Government and Parliament",

... that though the consequences 'may be rather hard on a Minister from time to time', he 'must accept responsibility as if the act were his own'. Yet he has 'a perfect right to reveal the facts and to assure the House that he has taken suitable action' where his specific orders have been disobeyed. On one such occasion a disobedient officer in the Home Office had been castigated in the House.

There are numerous precedents where public servants have not abided by the directives of their ministers or have acted contrary to recognized principles of conduct and been castigated in the House. There is no doubt that Mr. Morrison's reference was to that. I suggest that to argue the contrary works against the growth of control by this House over the government and its operations. There is no doubt that if we are to say that the government and the ministers within that government are totally responsible for every act of civil servants, whether policy making or administrative, they will fight any move to liberate the flow of information, and that is as it should be. There is no doubt that no government can really act to the betterment of public interest if it sees that its public servants can be called on to account at any time without any clearance from their ministers. That is why I find it very strange that hon. members opposite have not sought to consider the aspect of freedom of information in terms of individual ministerial responsibility.

In an article entitled "Parliamentary Affairs" written by Leslie Wolf-Phillips there is a statement to the effect that in this House and in Westminster there has been a failure to deal with the question of secrecy in terms of ministerial responsibility. He states:

● (2040)

... the key justification for secrecy—the whole working of the existing system with its tradition that ministers act on confidential advice from a professional cadre of civil servants.

If we are to deal with secrecy, the justification for that secrecy is that public servants act in the belief that their particular counsel to their minister is going to be kept secret. If, on the other hand, the minister feels that he can throw the public service open to public scrutiny, indeed there is no question but that there is going to be a great interplay so that the public servants themselves will refuse to divulge to the minister—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the parliamentary secretary but his allotted time has expired. He may continue with the unanimous consent of the House. Does the hon. parliamentary secretary have unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: No.

Ministerial Responsibility

An hon. Member: That is enough.

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak on this motion today. We have somewhat rambled away from the meat of the motion, which reads:

That this House, finding unacceptable the performance of the Government, particularly its penchant for shifting blame, reaffirms its belief in the importance of the convention of ministerial responsibility and expresses its lack of confidence in the Government.

I have no hesitation in supporting that motion. We got on to the subject of civil servants, and the Postmaster General (Mr. Mackasey) said that the Conservative party was going to fire tens of thousands of civil servants. Mr. Speaker, I do not recall us making any such statement.

Mr. Mackasey: I said 50,000.

Mr. McKenzie: Even 50,000—that is not correct. There is an element of concern on the part of civil servants. In an article in the *Winnipeg Tribune* of May 15, 1976, entitled "The Big Sleep" Jacques Grenier writes:

Because of the sheer size of the bureaucracy, a civil servant who wants to can go almost completely underground performing little or no work. A federal employee at the National Museums of Canada admitted to me he works about an hour a week. He makes over \$15,000 a year. A bright young bureaucrat with the Foreign Investment Review Agency admits working about two hours a week. His salary is \$28,000.

An acquaintance of mine who has been in the civil service for four years, with a salary in excess of \$20,000 confided, "I took this job because I wanted to make some kind of difference. Now I'm working a total of about three hours a week. It's at something I don't like, and there is no real way out of it." He is completely disillusioned.

This is what we should be concerned about in the civil service. I hope the minister has investigated the charges made in this article of federal civil servants drawing \$28,000 to work two hours a week.

The minister said he is proud of his government's record. After this latest budget with about a \$5 billion deficit, I do not think he has anything to be proud of. This year the Post Office will have a deficit of three-quarters of a billion dollars. That is nothing to be proud of; he should be ashamed.

Turning to ministerial responsibility, Mr. Speaker, I should like to refer to an article in yesterday's *Globe and Mail* regarding the air travel privileges which cabinet ministers receive, as well as the leaders of the opposition.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): And some members of parliament.

Mr. McKenzie: I said leaders of the opposition. The article quoted the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Marchand) as follows:

Do you think it's funny for an airline to know that the Prime Minister is going to travel with them? And for the passengers. If I was a passenger I would not want to travel on the same aircraft as the Prime Minister. So many people want to kill this man.

I think the minister has a responsibility to report this to the RCMP. If he knows that so many people want to kill the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) he has a ministerial responsibility to report it. Is he getting phone calls or letters from kooks? What is he going to do about it? Maybe the list is too long to present to the RCMP.