

to almost any length to conceal it. It explains why the government fears to proceed with an open information law which would be effective in providing members of this party, members of this House, and members of the public, with an opportunity to find out what is the truth.

Let me use another illustration. I mentioned the public. What about the case involving the *Toronto Sun*? The Solicitor General (Mr. Blais) told us how he toiled, sweated, and strove mightily for 17 hours to examine 17,000 documents. Out of those 17,000 documents he extracted 580 odd and said those documents must be covered by section 41(2) of the Federal Court Act. He swore an affidavit that he had personally examined them and that, in his opinion as an officer of the Crown and as Solicitor General, those documents should not be made public.

What we have seen demonstrated by the facts established by the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham is that we cannot rely on statements such as that made by the Solicitor General. I am not saying that he personally may not have believed that, but the information upon which he swore that affidavit resulted in 500 odd documents not being produced in the trial of the *Toronto Sun* and Peter Worthington. Reputable counsel in that case said those documents were essential in order to conduct an adequate defence. The Solicitor General said no, they were not. How can the court in that case, and the accused, rely on that affidavit which unfortunately, as the law now exists, cannot be appealed? It is binding. It is mandatory. Under those conditions, surely any reasonable, rational, intelligent person must have great doubts about the quality of that affidavit sworn by the Solicitor General and filed with the court in the Official Secrets Act case against Peter Worthington and the *Toronto Sun*.

**Mr. Lalonde:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I have followed carefully what the hon. member is saying. If I am not mistaken, he is implying that the affidavit given by the Solicitor General (Mr. Blais), should not be believed, and what he said in this House, that he had personally examined over 500 documents in question here, is not believed by the hon. member. If that is what the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) is implying, I suggest it is contrary to the rules of this House and very unparliamentary. He should withdraw those remarks, or at least clarify what he has said.

**Mr. Pinard:** Resign.

**Mr. Baldwin:** I will wait four months to resign. It will be a good time then. I made it quite plain in my remarks, and I will examine them carefully when I get the chance to read them tomorrow, that I was not suggesting that the Solicitor General was deliberately trying to mislead this House. I said to relate that case to the present case. The Solicitor General said that in 17 hours he examined all of these documents, selected 584, and filed an affidavit. The letter received by the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham, which was apparently prepared by people involved in the law enforcement agencies in this country, contained inaccuracies, and therefore must give grave concern to the court in the Peter Worthington case. It must

*Privilege—Mr. Lawrence*

also give great concern to the accused in that case. Unfortunately, unlike this case, there is no appeal. It is a binding affidavit. That is an indication it is a bad law. I suggest to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lalonde) that if he will look at that situation, that is what he will find.

● (1702)

What concerns me, and I believe all people in this country, is a government which does not hesitate when it is trouble to make use of the invidious provisions of Section 41(2) of the Federal Court Act, or of the Official Secrets Act, whenever it finds its position is endangered.

**Mr. Lalonde:** Rather than make a specific statement, the hon. member prefers to go around by way of innuendo. But I understand what he said, and I presume the Solicitor General (Mr. Blais) reserves his right to intervene on this issue. I would like to put it on record that he does reserve his right to intervene.

**Mr. Baldwin:** I have listened to the Minister of Justice, who is a master of innuendo, and who has made great use of that particular talent.

**An hon. Member:** Cheap! Resign!

**Mr. Baldwin:** I will resign if you will come up and run against me. It explains precisely why, in the unfortunate case of Bernard Maguire under the provisions of the Human Rights Act, an act by which theoretically we were supposed to have the right to examine our own files but which has proved to be an utter farce, Mr. Maguire, deeply injured by actions of the authorities, was allowed to look at some of his file, from which had been rifled some of the most important aspects, and was then told that under no condition would he be allowed to publish or use what was on the file and, in effect, that if he did so he would be prosecuted under the Official Secrets Act. The attitude of the government in this case explains these things, Mr. Speaker.

I am not going to delay the House unnecessarily but I think it is a shocking thing that a government, in this stage of its life, faced with an obvious illustration of deliberate deception, has a senior member of this House refuse to allow the facts to come to the public through a committee, refuses to allow witnesses who are involved to appear before that committee, refuses to allow witnesses to be sworn, examined and cross-examined, a process which under our system for hundreds of years has proved to be the most effective way of getting at the truth. I am just amazed if what the President of Privy Council said a little while ago is the policy of the government. If that is their attitude and their point of view then, in the words of Cromwell, for God's sake, go, we have had enough of you.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North):** Mr. Speaker, I will be brief because we have already heard extensive argument with reference to this matter.