

that ground alone members who support the government should examine their consciences as they vote on this motion this afternoon.

How shall we proceed when we get this question before the committee? The first person who should be called should be the then solicitor general. It would be very worthwhile not only that he be given an opportunity to give his side of the story but, if he continues with his argument that he did not know what he was signing or that he did not know that certain activities were taking place, which activities he was denying in his letter to me, that we also find out who put the letter in front of him. I think it would be a worthy exercise of the jurisdiction of the committee to call that particular individual, and to learn of his knowledge of the facts in question.

● (1552)

Was he attempting to mislead the then solicitor general, or is his alibi also going to be that he did not honestly know that the security service was interfering by opening mail? I think that is the next step. That would be the witness who logically should be called next. He was the person who put the letter in front of the then solicitor general, which the then solicitor general signed.

I think the third witness should then be the person who drafted the letter which was given to the individual who gave it to the then solicitor general. I know this sounds humorous, but this is the kind of situation in which there should be a logical progression of witnesses so that we can come to the truth. I suggest that it would be in the interest of the government to get this kind of information before a parliamentary committee as much as it would be in the interest of anyone else. The government should be seeking the truth as well.

We should then get to the stage where we could find out who gave orders and who, at a responsible level in the law and security agencies of this country, actually did have knowledge as to what was taking place and how often it was taking place. These are matters which perhaps should be discussed in another forum such as a royal commission, but because they deal very pertinently and very directly with the matter of contempt of this House and the misleading of a member and perhaps of members of this House, they should also be discussed in a parliamentary committee, if for no other reason than that members of parliament themselves should be quite incensed and quite indignant that this type of fraud was actually perpetrated on members of the House of Commons, because it was. There is no question about that. The evidence is there.

We certainly owe it to ourselves, to those who have gone before us and to those who will come after us, to make sure that such a situation does not arise again. That is not the job of a royal commission. That is the job of the Parliament of Canada or of a committee of the Parliament of Canada.

In short—

An hon. Member: In short?

Privilege—Mr. Lawrence

Mr. Lawrence:—I think the committee will have to make every attempt, impartially and independently, to hear the evidence of everyone else who knew or should have known that this type of thing was taking place.

The importance of the matter's going to a committee is obvious. There is absolute evidence now on the record—and obviously more will come—that this matter has in the past been referred to the executive council of the Government of Canada. One example—and there are others—was the example of June, 1969.

Another matter which has never been clear and about which perhaps the committee should make inquiries, is a matter which very directly touches the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Trudeau). The Prime Minister admits that he gave directives to the RCMP, and the security service in particular, in 1970 which obviously resulted in stepped up intelligence activities in this country and perhaps elsewhere. These clearly were followed by some of the worst abuses we have heard about in the history of law enforcement agencies in this country. Those directives were given on your behalf, Mr. Speaker, on my behalf, and on behalf of the people of this country.

I raise no question with respect to the motivation or the intention of the Prime Minister regarding the directives he gave in 1970. It cannot just be a coincidence that these matters followed those directives. Those directives have never been made public by the Government of Canada or by the Prime Minister. They should be. We have every right to know what has been going on in our name in respect of some of these security force activities, and in respect of the guidelines and directives which were issued in 1970 by this government. That again is a realm of activity and authority which must be looked at by a committee of this House.

If some hon. members of this House honestly and impartially believe that this matter should not go to a committee of the House, I can only say that that would be a tragedy for the traditions and the responsibilities of this House. It would be more than that. It would be further evidence of an intention and a direct attempt by the government of the day to cover from public gaze matters which should be uncovered, should come under full sunlight and should be exposed to the people of this country.

I am not necessarily talking about activities relating to foreign agents in the country. I am not talking about detailed activities. I am talking about the over-all guidelines which we have not yet seen, and attempts to shove under the mat activities which almost everyone connected with the security industry—and it is an industry—knew about. For the government to continue its sorry record and history of covering these matters up, I think would be a further travesty of justice and the seeking of justice in this country. When I said “its sorry record and history of covering these matters up”, I fully expected to hear some yelp of complaint from the ministerial benches, and I would have been fully prepared to document some of these things. However, I heard nothing.