

By that I mean, instant communications can do amazing things in bringing news into the drawing rooms of the nation, but it can do amazing things in bringing that information in a form which makes it much more difficult for government to carry on effectively and responsibly. This new kind of information process is unlike anything we ever experienced in the past. In the face of this, the pressure on government will increasingly be to be more rather than less careful in what it gives out.

I don't know how to put it. Supposing we had nothing but weekly newspapers or nothing but newspapers, the reader has a chance to compare what is written with something else that is written. There may not be another newspaper for a few days. He can ponder over it; he can brood over it; he can make up his own mind.

When the picture appears (on television) at 6:30 of something that happened at 6:25 and the photographer hasn't had much chance to do anything much but take the picture and nobody's had much chance to do anything but show the picture and 20 minutes later you get some pundit telling you what it means; the impact this must have on government, on its responsibilities and on what it is doing – well you can see this new problem. I mention it not because it caused me any unusual trouble; it didn't. I had a better experience with the press and the media as Prime Minister than most Prime Ministers have. I have no complaint.

I am profoundly concerned about the problem as a problem, as you would be and as my friends in the press and the media are.

### ... On civil servants

I'm in a pretty good position to analyze the strength and weaknesses of a strong bureaucracy. We hear a lot about that these days. As government gets more complicated, the experts and officials become more and more important and get more powerful. This is, in itself, almost inevitable.

It's extremely important how they use that power and how they use it in subordination to the greater power of Parliament and the elected representatives of the people and government in that sense.

Now I was a civil servant and I don't recall doing anything in my civil service days that I didn't do under the authority and the instruction of my minister.

I've heard a lot of talk in recent years that the civil service does dominate, that they lead the politicians by the nose. It wasn't so in my day in the civil service, believe me, and it wasn't so in my day as a Prime Minister.

I know they have great power and it's inevitable they should have great power but they have a very real sense of parliamentary responsibility in my experience.

The danger is that so much has to be done, so much preliminary work has to be done, so much has to be done in the way of report and analysis, and investigation that, in spite of themselves, they will usurp func-

tions which are parliamentary and governmental functions.

There is danger of this happening. More now than previously. It is not by design on the part of the civil service but almost by accident – by default. The politicians have to be very careful about that – the Cabinet ministers. Therefore it is very important to have the good kind of relationship between a minister and his deputy.

This is going to be an even greater danger if you build up in the East Block (the Prime Minister's office) a sort of great general staff of civil servants. Or not even civil servants, people brought in. Some of this is inevitable, but it has within it great dangers because a civil servant who has come through the ranks does learn something about responsible government in relationship to a minister.

A dollar a year man who may be brought in from outside hasn't got that same kind of feeling or background.

### ... On Parliament

It's a very slow, long, slow process to alter the structure of legislative processes, which, in our minds, seem to be almost eternal. After all they only go back about 200 years but we have been taught in our school systems and in our history that this is the finest flowering of human political genius, our existing parliamentary system based on the House of Commons in London and Westminster.

So it is in a sense; but it can disappear, not because of attacks directly made on it by subversives outside, but because of its inability to take care of the business of the country; and this means we have to speed up our processes and we have to broaden the responsibilities of committees and give them more important things to do and give the private members more to do. This means changing a lot of the regulations.

If you try to adapt your machinery of government in an organized way, as a sort of scientific technical process, to the problems today, I don't think you'll get very far, any further than you used to in the old method.

So what are we going to do? We have problems facing this country that are so far removed from anything we ever had in the past and so far beyond the ability of our ordinary parliamentary and executive process to deal with them quickly that I just don't know what we are going to do.

Somebody said the other day there are 53 items of legislation the government has that they'd like to get through Parliament. They can't do it. Now this is what makes me most depressed about the whole future nationally and internationally. Nationally that we are not going to be able to adapt our institutions and our parliamentary and democratic processes to the requirements of all these new problems.

Why even now in the House of Commons when we tried to streamline our rules and our regulations and to try and reconcile the requirements of parliamentary discussion

with the even greater requirement of facing up to the problems, there is a tendency to look at that in terms of a threat to Parliamentary democracy of the nineteenth century.

While nobody could believe more in discussions and the prelude to agreement or disagreement – that's been my whole life – that's diplomacy, I get very worried about the inability to relate this kind of thing to new conditions.

Internationally it's even worse but it's even simpler. Falling back as we seem to be now, even more than 10 years ago, falling back on national sovereignty, national pride, national interests and we have had examples of it in our own country – each nation for itself, God for us all – this kind of attitude, at a time when we have discovered ways of destroying the globe because of the play of international forces, national sovereignties competing against other national sovereignties.

To talk in terms of nineteenth century international power politics at this day and age makes, well it's just tragic nonsense; and yet, when I talk about this now – I get less of a response when I talk about it publicly than I would have 10 years ago.

We are not as frightened as we were 10 years ago or 20 years ago, and if I have learned one thing from my international experience, more than anything else, it is that the progress towards internationalism, toward international organization and international action in international life, is very often related to a crisis or a fear. If the crisis is resolved, or the fear becomes diminished by custom, then you fall back on the same old shopworn sort of national attitudes and institutions of 100 years ago.

This planet can't live with them. Not in the days of nuclear energy and everything else that is happening to the planet.

### ... On religion

My religion was never one of passionate intensity and so there hasn't really been any change in my fundamental beliefs. I would put at the front of my fundamental beliefs a belief in the inherent good of the individual person, my belief in the perfectability of human nature under the influence of what you might call a divine being; there is more of that in human beings than there is of the opposite: More God than anti-Christ.

When I get depressed as I have been, and I have been speaking as if I were depressed about the state of the world, I can take encouragement from that belief that there are more good people in the world than there are bad and that somehow the good will overcome the evil.

You must cling to that. If we hadn't had that in the world in the last 50,000 years, we wouldn't be around here at all. There must be over the long run a move upwards in humanity.

What worries me about this movement is that we are moving faster now in some directions and have moved faster in some