

Manpower and Immigration Council

annual report, although I went through a couple of them and could not find it.

So, sir, I suggest there is ample precedent as to the general practice over past years for a statutory body such as is being set up here to report in some way to the House of Commons.

In my researches I also went to the classic writers on this subject. Again the question is the closeness or remoteness of control exercised by parliament. Since it seemed to me that this matter had been approached on a somewhat pragmatic basis, and probably more so in Canada because there is less dealing with this subject here than in England where there is some but not very much, I started with good old Edmund Burke—a Tory should start with a Tory—in order to try to find a philosophy that could be suggested in regard to this matter. In his work published in 1808 Burke had this to say:

The House of Commons was supposed originally to be no part of the standing government of this country. It was considered as a control, issuing immediately from the people.

Burke depicted it as being to the higher part of government what juries are to the lower part of government. Then he said:

—this character can never be sustained, unless the House of Commons shall be made to bear some stamp of the actual disposition of the people at large.

I suggest that the actual disposition of the people at large, if they have any preference or think of it at all, is to want to know rather than to have it otherwise.

Finally, I quote a constitutional authority of the past, Walter Bagehot. In his work on the English constitution he defines the real function of the house as comprising three elements: first, “to express the mind of the people”; second, “to teach the nation what it does not know”; third, “to make us hear otherwise what we should not.”

As I pointed out at the start of this address, there are grave and important responsibilities resting on the shoulders of the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. I do not think anybody in this house wishes him ill in the discharge of those responsibilities. Indeed, we all wish him well. We hope that his manpower and immigration council will gather to it the best talent that is available in Canada, giving citizens the right to participate and play their part in dealing with the difficult problems, some of which I have enumerated.

Therefore I hope that in dealing with the question of whether or not the council should report to parliament we will approach it on the very broad basis that parliament should be jealous of its right to require such reports and very reluctant not to do so under such circumstances unless there is good reason otherwise. I do not think any group of citizens on the council or on the boards set up by this legislation will feel themselves inhibited in any way. Certainly those on comparable councils have not from knowing that their chairmen at least would draw up a report on their activities dealing with some of the problems they had explored and reporting on them to the House of Commons. Therefore, sir, to make my point I move, seconded by the hon. member for Argenteuil-Deux-Montagnes (Mr. Régimbal):

That Bill C-150 be not now read a third time but be recommitted to the committee of the whole house for the purpose of adding a clause which would require the proposed council to report to parliament annually.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): Is the house ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Six o'clock.

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, in the minute or two before we adjourn at six o'clock I do not wish to discuss the amendment but I do want to speak on the bill itself for which third reading is being sought.

Some hon. Members: Six o'clock.

Mr. Brewin: Mr. Speaker, some hon. members are seeing the clock at six.

[Translation]

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): Order, please. It being six o'clock, it is my duty pursuant to provisional standing order 39A, to inform the house that the questions to be raised at the time of adjournment tonight are as follows: The hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Choquette), Federal-provincial conference—inquiry concerning the agenda of the next conference; the hon. member for Queens (Mr. Macquarrie), Transport—Borden-Tormentine ferry service—reported numerous lay-offs.