

(Mr. Lawrence) and others who are now saying what a terrible thing Bill C-157 was, and it was, and what an assault it was on civil liberties. I ask those great defenders of civil liberties, where were they in May, June, July, August, right on through until January? They kept their heads in the sand and refused to take a stand. When the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West piously stands up and suggests that—

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. In answer to the Hon. Member's question, I was in Toronto speaking against the Bill.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members should not interrupt the Hon. Member who has been recognized to make a speech.

Mr. Robinson (Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, once again I am pleased to see the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West. I am sure he will want to clarify the record if indeed he has taken a stand on behalf of his Party, or if the Hon. Member for Durham-Northumberland, who I believe was the critic, took a stand. Certainly I would be delighted to see the House enlightened as to the position that they took.

That silence was broken on one occasion by Elmer MacKay, the former Member for Central Nova, a couple of days after the Bill was tabled. First, he strongly supported the establishment of a civilian security service. He went on to say that in his view, Bill C-157 probably contained too many civil liberty safeguards which would hamper the work of the new security service. I should not have suggested that the Tory caucus was totally silent. I should have made reference to the remarks of the former Hon. Member for Central Nova. However, at a time when the Conservative Party had an obligation to speak out forcefully on civil liberties it remained shamefully silent. I remind Members of this House that that Member is now the senior policy adviser to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Mulroney).

There were serious flaws in Bill C-157. The Solicitor General who brought that Bill forward heralded it as a great new innovation, a profound contribution to the strengthening of civil liberties of all Canadians. Of course, we know better. I am not going to take the time of the House to analyse in detail the deficiencies of that legislation. That has been done on a number of occasions, not in this House, but in forums across this country. The provisions of that Bill would have allowed the new security service, for example, under Clause 21 effective *carte blanche* to break any law, federal or provincial in this land. There were provisions in Clause 12 of the Bill which imposed, effectively, a media gag, a gag on the reporting of anything relating to the security service, even illegalities. There were provisions in Clause 2 of Bill C-157 which suggested that my colleague and friend, the Hon. Member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), could have had his mail opened, because of the threat to the security of Canada, for suggesting that we abolish the Senate. What kind of Bill was it which had provisions, Mr. Speaker, which would have allowed the director of that security service to tell the Solicitor General to get lost if the Solicitor General felt it was inappropriate for a particular group to be targeted? That is the kind of legisla-

tion which the Solicitor General brought forward at the time, the Solicitor General who remains, by some miracle, within the Cabinet and continues to bring it forward.

● (1510)

Bill C-157 was sent off to a Senate committee, chaired by Senator Pitfield who, interestingly enough, was one of the key advisers to the Government in its response to the report of the McDonald Commission. That Senate committee thoroughly studied the provisions of Bill C-157 and made a number of recommendations for improving that legislation, although it adopted the essential principles of the Bill. I should note as well that although this legislation meets some criticisms of the Pitfield committee, there are a number of important criticisms which were made by that committee which have not in fact been addressed. I should note as well that despite the scathing criticisms—which I certainly share—from the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West with respect to a number of provisions of Bill C-9, once again there would appear to be a double standard because the recommendations of the Pitfield committee, which formed the basis for this Bill—with one or two glaring exceptions—were recommendations based upon a unanimous report of the Senate committee. In other words, what the Conservative Party unanimously supported in the other place, it attacks in the House. It is not easy to follow that kind of logic.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak about the provisions of Bill C-9 itself and point to what we in this Party consider to be a number of very serious inadequacies in this legislation.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, I must say Bill C-9 is still entirely unacceptable to the NDP. I do not think the Bill provides for that essential balance between the protection of individual rights and national security. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service is going to be a Canadian version of the CIA in the United States, with all the powers of that Agency and the possibility of abusing those powers. For instance, the Service will be given extensive powers such as opening first class mail and access to confidential tax and medical files, for instance.

Despite the improvements in this new version of the Bill, we believe it still constitutes an affront to the civil liberties of all Canadians.

[English]

There are three or four fundamental areas in this legislation which I would like to deal with. I would like to point out some of our broader areas of concern without dealing in detail, of course, at this second reading stage with the provisions of the Bill. It is important to examine carefully the proposed scope of this legislation. Under the terms of Bill C-9 there are three primary activities of the new security service. First, the security service would have the ability to monitor effectively and provide intelligence on what are defined as "threats to the security of Canada". Second, the security service would have