

Morality in Government

Second, I should like to ask the hon. member whether he knows that these allegations were categorically denied by the gentleman mentioned, namely Mr. Hugh Lawford, in the next day's issue of the *Ottawa Citizen*.

Mr. Hamilton: Mr. Speaker, I mentioned when I started to read the article of Douglas Fisher that I knew that the article had been objected to by the person mentioned, Mr. Lawford. I also went on to say that no action had been forthcoming. I simply say that in the refutation of this article by Mr. Lawford he threatened to sue, and I am waiting for the suit to start.

Mr. Stewart: May I ask another question. May I ask the hon. member if the mere fact that a person does not persist in an action in the courts is to be taken as conclusive evidence of the accuracy of allegations against which the person objected?

Mr. Hamilton: Mr. Speaker, I want to state my conviction so that there is no misunderstanding. I have been in this house for nine years. During that time, specifically in the last two or three years, I know that rumours have been floating around this place the like of which I have not known before. When this case of which we cannot talk developed, things appeared in the papers which turned out to be untrue. Now, somebody must have started these rumours, and I put Mr. Douglas Fisher's opinion as to who one of the sources was on the record.

What I have to say now is very blunt and to the point. What the hon. member is saying in his question is that I am trying to nit-pick; that I am accepting responsibility for every word written by Douglas Fisher. He is completely missing my main plea. Certainly somebody was spreading these rumours; they did not get abroad by accident. I heard them myself and from Liberal M.P.'s, but I will not stoop so low as to mention any names. I simply ask where these rumours started from. I quoted one source, and I am now wondering why we are so naïve in not realizing the tremendous public relations effort put in by the government in 1963 in lieu of policies. They are trying to do this by means of a type of public relations smear and scandal campaign, which must stop if we are to exist as a parliament.

Mr. B. S. Mackasey (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, having listened earlier this evening

to the speech of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and comparing it to the speech just made by the hon. member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Hamilton), I am sure the people in the galleries will all know just how sick parliament has become. The hon. member for Qu'Appelle saw fit to attack this person named Hugh Lawford for about ten minutes in what was to me the most puzzling speech of the day, because I do not know what purpose it served. Nevertheless it seemed to me both despicable and cowardly for a member of parliament to stand in this house and attack a civil servant, whose only recourse is to sit silently in the galleries and listen to the hon. member read what is nothing more than gossip, inference and slander.

I have been a member of this house for four years. Like most new members, when I first came here I had no fear or hesitation about standing up in the House of Commons and issuing what I thought, in my humble way, was a belligerent and vicious attack. In those days I viewed every member outside the Liberal party as an enemy.

Since then, Mr. Speaker, I like to think that I have matured a little. In the four years I have been here I have come to know most members of this house, regardless of party, by their first names. It is no secret that after hours I have had the chance to fraternize with most members—Créditistes, Socialists, Conservatives. I can say without fear of contradiction that individually I do not know a nicer group of people.

I sit in this house, Mr. Speaker, day in and day out, rarely participating in debates, though at times when I do it may be in a belligerent manner, but I am puzzled and wonder why this House of Commons has deteriorated to such a state that the Mun-singer affair could become a reality. I wonder why we are discussing an amendment reflecting upon the integrity of a man who has yet to have an opportunity to defend himself. I refer to our Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson), who is ill.

It seems to me that the question raised today on the supply motion should have waited until the Prime Minister was present in this house. I think the hon. member for Royal (Mr. Fairweather), in introducing the amendment, did so in a very reasonable manner, as is his custom. He is worried, as am I, about the freedom of individuals both inside and outside parliament. I think that all hon. members on this side of the house share