

and it was to be a day when questions could be asked and presumably answers obtained. It certainly did not turn out to be the kind of day it was supposed to be. Instead, the House was treated to a rambling, filibustering, arrogant monologue, and in effect we were told that it was not our business to ask searching questions.

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In effect we were told that the executive branch of the government was supreme and it could do what it liked to do without accountability to parliament, and therefore without accountability through parliament to the Canadian people themselves. The Prime Minister was not only demonstrating arrogance and his dislike of the rights of the democratic opposition but, what is far more important, he was demonstrating his obvious attitude that the government has some sort of God given right to do anything it wishes to do without being properly and adequately questioned about it. His performance was an indignant and almost sneering response on behalf of the government to those who dared to exercise their right on behalf of the people of Canada to examine the galloping rise in government expenditures since the Prime Minister came to office.

One need only look at what has happened to government expenditures since 1968. Then federal government expenditures were about \$12.25 billion. This year they are over double this figure, \$28 billion, or a little more. In the last year alone, the government has increased its expenditures by over \$6 billion taken from the taxpayers' pockets. Years ago the late C. D. Howe made that now famous remark, which came back to haunt him years later, "What's a million?". Today, the government has brought that remark right up to date by saying in effect, "What is another six or seven billion dollars?"

If one works out the total government expenses right down into hours, the government is spending over \$3.25 million an hour to carry out its operations. One can only imagine with horror the inevitable disaster to which such policies are taking the economy of the country, and what the inevitable result will be for a democratic parliament if we stand by and allow the power of the executive branch of the government to continue to run wild.

I realize that in using figures to illustrate the situation in Canada today one runs the severe risk of drawing from the Prime Minister a ridiculous statement, such as the one made in the House on Thursday, May 22, and I quote from page 6011 in *Hansard*. He said: "What I am pointing out is that the hon. member for Leeds is making fraudulent use of statistics". I can only presume that the Prime Minister was referring to figures which I have used in regard to the galloping increases in expenses in connection with the operation of his office, his official residence, his summer home, and the expenses of the Privy Council office. I suggest that if any of these figures are fraudulent, the guilt should be laid directly where it belongs, namely, at the feet of the Prime Minister of Canada, because any figures that I have quoted with regard to such expenses have been taken directly from answers given by the Prime Minister himself to questions asked in the House by me and other members of this party. If the figures are fraudulent, the Prime Minister himself must accept the blame.

Auditor General

In 1970 the cost of operating the Prime Minister's office was just over \$1 million, and today, five years later, in 1975, the cost will be over \$2 million. If such figures are fraudulent, they are taken directly from government records. The cost of operating the Privy Council office in 1970 was \$5,800,000, and this year, just five years later, the figure has gone up to over \$17 million. If such figures are fraudulent then the fraud has been committed by the Prime Minister and the government.

In his remarks on May 22 the Prime Minister made light of his own expenses by referring to his ashtrays and his chandeliers. He tried to make a joke of it all in the hope, I presume, that it would be simply swept aside or buried. The fact is that his chandeliers and ashtrays provide a very clear indication of the over-all champagne taste of the present government when it comes to spending public money. It starts at the top with the Prime Minister's emperor complex, it goes along to the royal style of living of the Prime Minister, and moves on without any restraint whatsoever through every department of government. Never was the champagne taste of the government more apparent than when one has examined the cost of the Prime Minister's residence itself, figures that show that the operating costs have increased 173 per cent since the present occupant of 24 Sussex Drive moved in.

If ever there was an example of increasing power of the executive branch, it was the refusal on the part of the Prime Minister to allow Michael Pitfield to appear before the Miscellaneous Estimates Committee. In short, the committee and this House were told that certain people in the entourage of government are beyond questioning by the elected representatives of the people. It is almost as if Sussex Drive has become the emperor's palace where statements will be made when the emperor wishes to make them, and in the meantime those of us in parliament should behave by not asking questions.

The arguments advanced by the Prime Minister that Mr. Pitfield was in a position where, as secretary to the cabinet, he would undoubtedly know cabinet secrets and therefore could not testify because of this, are nothing more than sheer nonsense. If a question in this area had been asked, Mr. Pitfield could have declared that he could not answer it because of his attendance at cabinet meetings. There are other questions Mr. Pitfield could have been asked and could have answered. But he has been hidden away from examination. The Privy Council office grows in size to almost 400 people, with another 100 in the Prime Minister's office, and yet this group has been placed on some sort of pedestal beyond proper and adequate parliamentary control.

It might be appropriate to refer to words written by the Prime Minister himself in April of 1963 when he wrote of the Liberal party: "There is not remaining in this party one single man for whom principles mean more than power". It seems to me that the Prime Minister has been reading his own words to a point where he has now put them into practice himself, where it has become power for the sake of power on the part of the executive branch of the government, rather than power for the sake of solving the problems of the people of Canada.