

What has this evidence said? It said there has been interference with the mails as a legitimate vehicle and a legitimate weapon to enforce the laws against the criminal element of this country, and also to enforce national security in this country. Personally, I have no great argument with that. If it is necessary, it should be done. However, it should be done legally. If there is not the vehicle to have it done legally, then the government of the day is negligent in its duty by not making sure what is done by the law enforcement agency is in fact legal.

Law enforcement agencies in every country today, but in particular in this country today, should not have to reach to the bottom level of integrity and morality where they attempt to fight fire with fire. Who else is going to enforce the law if the law enforcement agencies themselves break the law? That is a fundamental question to this matter that should obviously be considered by this House and by a committee of this House.

Number one, the contradictory testimony, the statements and inferences of these officers and officials, indicate there has been interference with the mail. Number two, the inference has been, if not already clearly stated in closed testimony before a royal commission, that the minister knew, or should have known about it, one or the other, because it is clearly taking place. Finally, we have the evidence in this House of the minister who says that he did not know that these events were taking place.

I wish to put on record a few quotations, if I may. According to Victor Marchetti, a former CIA employee and author of the book "The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence," among material that the United States government succeeded in suppressing from the book which has been published in the United States, at the request of the Government of Canada, was information detailing, and I quote:

—very close ties between the CIA and the RCMP.

Mr. Marchetti is an acknowledged expert and has appeared before congressional committees in the United States. Again quoting:

Your people are in very tight with us. We trained them.

The allegation has been made that the CIA in the United States, and this has not yet been denied, trained officers of Canada's security service of the RCMP in the techniques of interference with and openings of Her Majesty's mail in Canada. They actually trained them. When this information was to be published in the United States, the Government of Canada brought pressure to bear on the United States to suppress that information.

We are dealing with the question of governmental and ministerial knowledge. Somebody in the government must have known what was going on, otherwise that type of government pressure at the ministerial level would not have been brought to bear. It is as simple as that. However, we have the minister standing up in the House and saying he did not know what was going on. Under the rules, we must accept his version of the truth.

#### *Privilege—Mr. Lawrence*

Assistant Commissioner Thomas Venner indicated in testimony, and I quote:

Cabinet ministers are not anxious to be overly informed in details of names and cases.

When we relate that specifically to the case of mail openings, we may be led down the tortuous path that, if it was not misfeasance as far as knowledge on behalf of the minister was concerned, perhaps it was intentional malfeasance on behalf of the minister. I need not point out that one is as bad as the other in respect of criminal activity or in respect of knowledge.

We still do not know whether the minister did not know as he says he did not know. We still do not know whether he did not want to know. If he did not want to know, then he is as guilty as if he did know, and he himself actively committed that contempt against every member of this House. That is the type of thing we have to inquire about in a committee of this House. Only a committee can properly adjudicate and inquire into that.

Assistant Commissioner Murray Sexsmith has stated that mail opening was terminated in 1976, largely because in the wake of American intelligence revelations, and I quote Mr. Sexsmith:

—you could already see the storm clouds on the horizon.

It was also because the Canadian news media, and I again quote:

—were convinced there was a Watergate and were desperately looking for one.

That is an Assistant RCMP Commissioner. If an Assistant RCMP Commissioner would make statements such as that, it is pretty hard for an unbiased, unprejudiced individual to believe that the person at the top of the ladder did not know about it.

Only a committee of this House can properly look into matters such as that, discuss such matters, and make conclusions. We cannot do it in this House. It would not even be possible for a royal commission to do that as well. Why? When a minister of the Crown stands up in this House and makes the statement he did not know about it, we have to accept that as the truth of the matter.

I have one other quote. RCMP Superintendent Patrick Banning made a very memorable quotation with regard to the illegal activities of the security service, and that is what we are talking about when we talk of mail opening and mail interference. He said, and I quote:

We are the second oldest profession. Delilah used a bit of disruptive tactic against Samson.

● (1542)

There is no question in my mind that RCMP Superintendent Patrick Banning knew about mail opening. There is no question in my mind that Assistant RCMP Commissioner Murray Sexsmith knew about mail opening. There is no question in my mind that RCMP Superintendent Donald Cobb knew about mail opening, or that assistant RCMP Commissioner Thomas Venner knew about mail opening—he has admitted it. There is no question in my mind that the commis-