

Privilege—Mr. Lawrence

Certainly it is not the exercise of either the ministerial responsibility or parliamentary responsibility to find a question of privilege on one sentence by one witness contradicted by other witnesses in testimony that is not yet complete, that has not been tested by other witnesses and that has not been the subject of cross-examination.

Who said that this was necessary? That is why we have the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, so that members of that committee can test the witnesses and can decide whether this sentence is contradicted somewhere else, or whatever the case may be. That is the whole reason we are asking that this should go to a committee.

Then the President of Privy Council, in the lowest blow, attempted to involve us in a conspiracy. He noted how the government is the victim of a lot of conspiracies now. The poor Prime Minister went to Toronto and spoke to the lukewarm Toronto Liberals and told them that there was a great conspiracy to get the Liberals out of the government, to defeat them. He said that the press was against them, the Conservatives were against them, the NDP were against them, the Social Credit were against them, that the people were against them, and it was all the result of a great conspiracy.

His deskmate, the government House leader, has the same conspiracy bug—not the kind of bugs the government has been putting in people's offices and houses through their agencies across Canada but another kind of bug. They have the conspiracy bug. The government House leader opened up his speech yesterday by saying that there was a conspiracy, that the official opposition had put forward the motion having prepared it on consultation with the Chair. It was put before us, he said, "obviously on a prearranged basis". In other words, there was a conspiracy, and even Mr. Speaker was involved in the conspiracy against the poor, pitiful hon. gentlemen opposite. Everybody is conspiring against them.

Imagine the President of Privy Council with his long record in the House saying that kind of claptrap, putting forward that kind of dangerous theory, that unless the Liberals stay in power in Canada, Canada will fall apart, and that it is a powerful and sinister conspiracy of people who are trying to pry them out of office to which they have attached themselves. They will cling to power by their fingernails, their toenails and their hangnails, and they will attempt anything to stay there. That is the effect of what the President of Privy Council said to us yesterday.

This is a sleazy, slinky, dingy government, and their actions yesterday proved it. They are sleazy, slinky and dingy. They are certainly not whiter than white; they are tattletale gray. They are not bright. Their whole performance in the last two years in the field of law and security is the sleaziest and dingiest of any elected democratic government in the world, and they still have not stopped.

All the defences that are alleged in connection with the McDonald commission give one cause to think and to worry. There was the Laycraft inquiry on the fact that the Department of National Revenue and the RCMP had ignored the law. All was given in testimony before the Laycraft inquiry. There is no confidentiality of information if the government wants to break the law and use it for its own purpose. The

[Mr. Crosbie.]

government is not concerned about that; they will just stay in their seats and vote baa, baa black sheep whenever they are told to vote baa, baa black sheep. They are not concerned with these dingy affairs. Then there was the Doyle case that I have spoken about here before.

I want to give the House a quotation which summarizes how this government administers the law. It is from Balzac, a Frenchman I believe, who lived from 1799 to 1850. He said: "Laws are spiderwebs through which the big flies pass and the little ones get caught". So long as this government is in office, the big flies will go right through the spiderwebs. They are not paying their taxes, they are not obeying the law, and the little flies are getting caught. I am sick and tired of looking at them over there, satisfied, prepared to put up with it and voting blindly every time—

Mr. Broadbent: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: I have here another quotation which reads:

If police efficiency were an end in itself, the police would be free to put an accused on the rack. Police efficiency must yield to constitutional rights.

That was a statement by an American judge, Judge Wisdom. He was talking about who will guard the guardians. That is the question here: Who will guard these guardians opposite us who do not care about parliamentary traditions? Who will guard what happens in the House, if the majority will use their majority to prevent this matter from being referred to a committee for investigation? What a squalid spectacle, completely and utterly squalid.

● (2122)

The author of the squalidity is now over in Europe trying to take their minds off squalid affairs which are going on in the House of Commons. While he trips off to the United Kingdom and France, he is trying to take the public's mind off the squalid scene in the House tonight, all day today and yesterday. It is not going to work. It does not matter how the boa constrictor twists and turns, or what donkeys he swallows, or what horses he swallows. The Auditor General did not find any horses on the government payroll this year, but he found a large number of the rear part of horses on the public payroll. The horses are gone, but the horses' ends are not.

The hon. member for Northumberland-Miramichi better keep himself to saying, "oui, oui". There was a secret trial of Peter Treu. I remember in my youth listening to "The Shadow" on the radio. When that program was on, the saying used to be, "Only The Shadow knows". Well, only "The Shadow" knows in this House, because we do not know, and we are never going to know. It is only the government's little shadows that are going to know what happened and what are the true facts of the letter sent by the minister, who is right opposite me now, on December 4, 1973.

How can the minister sit in the House and have this matter discussed for two days, and not rise on his feet and say, "Gentlemen, this is what happened: I asked the RCMP", perhaps he might say, "to prepare an answer for me in all good faith, and this is the answer they prepared. I took them at their