

*Morality in Government*

except to say, as has been said in other places, that the terms of reference are cleverly designed as a government fishnet which, when carefully used, could gather in a very bitter harvest of wrecked careers of people in public life.

The evidence of Commissioner McClellan is now being subjected to a most interesting process of interpretation by unnamed spokesmen for the government. This is what brings the matter into the public domain and is why I feel it is quite proper to discuss it in this parliament. These unnamed spokesmen for the government and even, we learn, the members of the national executive of the Liberal party, have been asked for their opinions about the grave implication of the commissioner's disclosures in what is termed a question and answer session with the Prime Minister.

We know all about the open telephone line that is the new device of radio. It must have been a very open telephone line to 24 Sussex Drive this week end. The commissioner was not restricted in his instruction from the Prime Minister. As George Bain put it in today's *Globe and Mail*:

This was not to confine the commissioner to any evidence he might have about an offence or possible offence under any law; it was a straight request for any scandal or gossip that the R.C.M.P. might have acquired.

The file was delivered to the Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker, in November, 1964. Why, if matters of national security were at stake, did the government not use it until April, 1966? The security which to me is now of transcendent importance is the security of our very parliamentary system of government. Can anyone possibly believe that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police should in effect be used by government as a political force? To quote Mr. George Bain again:

If the R.C.M.P. can be called upon by any government for "information indicating any impropriety or anything of a scandalous nature" about members of parliament, who is to say that it cannot similarly be called upon for scandal about others? That was not wrongdoing under the law that the commissioner described in those words; that was the stuff of smear.

None of us can stand aside from this issue, Mr. Speaker. None of us can hide under any interpretation—

**Mr. McIlraith:** Mr. Speaker, I should like to raise a point of order at this stage. The hon. member is seeking to deal with a portion of the evidence which is now in the course of being given before a royal commission.

[Mr. Fairweather.]

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Now given.

**Mr. McIlraith:** Now in the course of being given before a royal commission.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Now having been given.

**Mr. McIlraith:** Mr. Speaker, I should like the courtesy from the Leader of the Opposition, because of the nature of the subject matter, of being allowed to make my point of order. Whether or not it is well founded is a matter for decision in due course.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** But your wording was incorrect.

**Mr. McIlraith:** I should like to make it with the usual rules of the house being applicable, namely, that I not be rudely interrupted by the right hon. gentleman from his seat in this house.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege, I did not rudely interrupt; I just corrected a statement that was incorrect.

**Mr. McIlraith:** Mr. Speaker, there is a procedure for correcting statements in this house which any hon. member thinks are incorrect. I should like the Leader of the Opposition, who I think has received courtesy from me in the past, to avail himself of the rules of the house and I ask him to observe them as the rest of us are expected to.

My point of order, at least as I see it, is deserving of the attention of this house. Very simply, it is this. A royal commission is sitting on this matter. Evidence is being given before it. The hon. member who now has the floor on this supply motion has been discussing—I take it he has been quoting from the record though personally I have not yet seen the record—a portion of the evidence which has been given before the royal commission.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if that is to be done with any matter which is before a royal commission or before a court, it must be patent to everybody that those bodies would not be able to carry on, because by the very nature of things evidence may not be completed at one sitting of a court or royal commission, and until it is complete, conclusions should not be drawn. The evidence comes out piece by piece, question by question, witness by witness. What I presume the hon. member is now seeking to do is to discuss one question and one answer that have come out in evidence on one day before the royal commission.