

I know the legal aspects of this matter. There is no question but that the CNR did all it had to do legally. But as the government, on the one hand, can airily throw \$1 billion into the unemployment insurance program, \$1 billion more than it originally intended to spend and, on the other hand, become involved in proposals for spending hundreds of millions of dollars in the giving of discounts under corporate tax write-offs for unlimited periods to a great many corporations, most of which will go to the United States, it seems to me that it could look at the situation before us and, as my hon. friend suggested, make a compassionate payment. After all, Mr. Lucas worked well and deserves the thanks of the people of this country. He and his fellow contractors deserve our thanks for what they did, and I think a compassionate allowance would be well within the range of possibilities that might be considered by the government and the CNR.

As the commissioner appointed pursuant to the order of the committee of this House failed to make public the reasons for his recommendation or failed to make his report in such a way that it could be made public, I submit that we, in this House, should be diligent in finding ways by which the report could be made public, so that this House and the people of this country might know why the commissioner acted as he did. To me, brought up in the traditions of the law in which trials are held in the full glare of publicity, in which witnesses testify in public, in which decisions are made public and in which appeals are allowed, it is intolerable that a judge of the Supreme Court should make a report of this kind which the government keeps from the people involved and from the members of this House. I think it is a vicious and intolerable system which allows this. For that reason I hope that some way may be found of making the report public. No harm would be done by it. On the basis of the report, once its contents are known to the members of the House, we might be free to recommend a compassionate payment. That is the particular reason for my support of this motion.

There is a more general reason for my support, namely, that there is too much secrecy surrounding the actions of this government, just as there is too much secrecy surrounding the actions of all governments. This government is particularly addicted to secrecy. We see that in the way ministers fail to answer questions, or answer irrelevantly, or do not provide answers that are responsive to the question. You cannot have a democratic institution operating in the shadows. Facts must be made public, must be made known. Why, in heaven's name, that is not the case I do not know. Why should not governments make public the facts, documents and information on which they act? I know that we often hear the same story. We are told, "Well, it is not possible. If decisions are to be made, the circumstances under which they are made must not be made known to the public. Such decisions would not be possible if civil servants were not allowed to operate furtively and secretly and if the public had knowledge of the recommendations which they make."

I disagree with such assertions violently. I should like to have the full right to make known the circumstances of such recommendations, and give others equally the right to appear before committees. Let them have the right to justify the recommendations and justify the facts which

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they make public, on the basis of which the government makes decisions.

There is an interesting article carried in a special "Playboy Forum" report entitled, "Mr. Nixon and the media". It reads in part:

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Why should freedom of speech and freedom of the press be allowed? Why should a government which is doing what it believes to be right allow itself to be criticized? It would not allow opposition by lethal weapons. Ideas are much more fatal things than guns. Why should any man be allowed to buy a printing press and disseminate pernicious opinions calculated to embarrass the government?

That is what Lenin, Russia's first communist dictator, said. Those are the questions he asked. They are statements which are being put in a little different way by governments in both this country and the United States. There is an attempt being made by the President and the present government of the United States to seriously impair the freedom of the press to make full disclosure of the facts coming to their attention. There is the Pentagon papers trial and reporters are imprisoned from time to time for refusing to make known their sources of information. By declaratory judgment in 1945, the United States supreme court declared, and I quote:

—"the assumption that the widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources is essential to the welfare of the [public] and that a free press is a condition of a free society."

I do not believe people listen to these things very carefully. All too often, governments do not listen. Slowly and insidiously, we see taken away from what has been a free society and the institutions of that free society, the right to demand the fullest possible dissemination of facts, information and documents. What the hon. member is asking here is an illustration of that statement which I have made.

I know that the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) has tabled a set of rules which he proposes on behalf of the government as the basis on which documents asked for by notices to produce should be produced. Let me say at once that is totally unsatisfactory to me. It is inadequate. It simply sets out in a formal documentary fashion the present exceedingly limited opportunities that are available today. Why should any minister or any government have the right to say that, in his opinion, it is in the public interest that this document be not disclosed? What special virtues surround any minister to permit him to make that statement? There is no question that in many instances it is because the disclosure of the documents would result in embarrassment. It is about time more ministers and more governments were embarrassed. It is time that we opened the windows then let in the fresh air and sunlight with the freest possible dissemination of information. Does the hon. member want to ask a question?

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Yes, Mr. Speaker. Why did the Conservatives not do so in 1962?

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, I said the same thing then. I do not care what government is in power. There was a great deal more freedom then. I sat behind the govern-