

I hope that in this country we will never yield to hysterical clamour for a witch-hunt; or accept mere association as a proof of guilt; or exploit for selfish reasons the genuine anxiety we all feel about our nation's safety; I hope also we can avoid loose and irresponsible talk about communists infesting government departments.

That kind of talk creates general suspicion, distrust of our system of government, division in our minds and among our people, uncertainty and uneasiness. Above all, it weakens confidence in the integrity of the government service, which weakening is one of the first objectives of the communist policy.

We can be grateful that we have been spared this kind of thing to any great extent in Canada. We should be on guard against it, however, just as we should be on guard against the more immediate menace of the individual who, beneath the mask of loyal service to his country, or wearing the mantle of the Peace Congress, has knowingly or unknowingly sold his soul to Moscow.

One result of unfair and irresponsible attacks on public servants as suspect or disloyal is that you may eventually get people so cautious, so mediocre, so determined not to do anything that will leave them open to criticism from any quarter, that your public servant will become as mechanical and inefficient as that of a Communist state. In Communist states the functionaires are so terrified of giving any advice or taking any initiative that may be regarded as a departure from the party line that they never make an original move, or give any objective advice at all. They merely tell those above them what they think those men want to hear.

A recent editorial in The New York Times has some wise words on this subject. May I quote its last two paragraphs:

"If we cannot do better, if every federal appointee to any important office is tried like a suspected criminal before he takes up his work and is thereafter likely at any moment to be assailed and denounced like an escaped convict, what sort of persons may we expect to have in public employment? Certainly they will not be the courageous, plain-spoken and intelligent men and women whom the urgency of our times demands. They are more likely to be weak mediocrities whose principal concern, like that of the minor functionary in far-away Russia, is to keep out of trouble. And democracy will become a pitiful mockery if its affairs are administered by people whose loftiest ambition is to make no mistakes.

"There is a security inherent in democracy itself which may be lost if we lose faith in free institutions. There is a security in the existence of intelligent men and women willing to make their own moral and intellectual decisions and abide by the consequences. There is a security in the fact that such men and women will not permit any agency of government, executive or legislative, to dictate such decisions to them. There is a security in the faith that does not shiver at every shadow or at the whistle of every wind. We must certainly devise a machinery, if we can, that will keep our essential secrets safe, but it would be far better for a few secrets to leak out than for this nation to imitate the communist or fascist pattern