

*Interim Supply*

David. There is a full report of the policy convention of the provincial Liberal party. I might state that in Ontario there is no distinction between federal and provincial Liberals. In Ontario, once a Liberal you are always a Liberal. The last paragraph of the interesting report reads:

The Toronto and district policy conference last year launched the campaign that led to changes in the party constitution to provide that the right of establishing party policy belonged to the rank and file.

Well, the *Globe and Mail* had a lot of accurate reporters; perhaps the reporter who wrote that thought he was accurate.

I want to give two examples tonight, in passing, of where policy is evidently supposed to start. As I said before, I shall talk of abortions and the establishment of the new system of honours and awards in Canada. I happen to be a member of the House of Commons health and welfare committee and have taken a deep interest in its work. I have not missed many meetings; if I have missed any it is because the whip has dragged me out to form a quorum on the veterans affairs committee or the broadcasting committee—but my first preference was health and welfare. We spent much time this past fall and winter discussing birth control. Man, oh man, we know more about contraceptives and what they do to prevent births throughout the world than any other group of men in North America.

**An hon. Member:** Tell us about it.

**Mr. Cowan:** It is too late tonight to tell you. But there were people running around the halls of parliament grabbing the coat lapels of the members of the health and welfare committee, whispering, "If anybody brings up abortions, we are not discussing abortions this year. Next year we will discuss them. If anybody asks you what you are doing about abortions just say that abortions are out this year; tell them they will be discussed next year. If they want to talk about contraceptives or birth control, tell them—don't discuss abortions. Tell them we are not discussing them."

It was most amazing, therefore, in February to be sitting in Toronto and to hear the announcement from on high that in 1967: "The government is going to change the laws on abortions." Well, that was interesting. That has never been discussed in caucus, never been discussed at a Liberal party convention and has never been discussed formally in gatherings of Liberals. But the abortion laws

are to be changed in 1967 "by the government". This is a serious matter.

On the 17th of April, when we were installing a new Governor General the Toronto *Star* aptly said—and I would not refer to the Governor General in the House of Commons were it not for the direct references made to him by the right hon. Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition in the debates of parliament—in a caricature of the situation showing the installation of the Governor General there appeared the poor little taxpayer remarking to the man standing and watching all the pomp and circumstance go rushing by, with its plumes and horses and red coats: "Boy, we spend a lot of time in Ottawa keeping up with yesterday."

**Mr. Lewis:** How long ago was yesterday?

**Mr. Cowan:** Two hundred years.

Then on April 17 we had the announcement of the right hon. Prime Minister, found on page 14967 of *Hansard*:

I would like to announce to the house the establishment of a system of honours and awards for Canada. Practically every sovereign country has such a system which it uses as a means of recognizing merit or gallantry, or distinguished public service. I believe that recognition of this kind can strengthen national pride and the appreciation of national service.

Then he says:

The government considers that there is a need in Canada...

It is my pleasure to announce that on the recommendation of the government Her Majesty has approved...

That was an interesting announcement, and I was very interested in getting the details. It was the very first we Liberals had heard of this. I am opposed to titles and honours. I should stress that many, many other Liberals are opposed to any system of titles, honours and awards in this country of Canada.

• (9:50 p.m.)

We have lived satisfactorily since 1919 under the impact of the Nickle resolution, which, of course, has been circumvented here and there just often enough to add a little spice to life. We find the Secretary of State for External Affairs writing letters asking people not to accept decorations from foreign governments because that is not in keeping with the policy of the Canadian nation. Then I have in my hand a press release put out by the Secretary of State for External Affairs announcing the award by France of the Legion of Honour to the Canadian ambassador to Switzerland. This is known as playing both