

freedoms are getting quite a battering in the discussion of Bill C-181. Here is what the minister said in part:

● (4:20 p.m.)

Government secrecy...may well be a denial of the public right to know. If individual privacy is a foundation of democracy, the citizen's right to know is fundamental to any participatory democracy. The public cannot be expected to dialogue meaningfully—still less decide—if it is refused the very information which would make such a dialogue and decision-making possible.

I have a feeling that the Minister of Justice might find it a little more difficult to go out and make that sort of speech today and be believed. We had another eminent authority, the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), before he succumbed to public life and when he was still all for participatory democracy, freedom of information, freedom of gatherings, and held strong views about civil liberties which he cherished so much. He made a statement on this subject a number of years ago. I do not know the exact number of years, but it appeared in that famous Montreal periodical *Cité Libre*. He took a very strong stand on the need for true and complete information. At that time he was dealing only with Quebec politics. He had not been saturated with Canadian national politics. He had not made that mental adjustment which he seems to have made so forcefully, that 180 degrees about-face in his thinking.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Baldwin: I suggest to hon. members that it is much better to approach a subject of this kind with an open mind rather than an open mouth. I ask hon. members on the other side to fall silent and listen with open worship and admiration to these comments of their great leader. This is what he said:

Democratic progress requires the ready availability of true and complete information.

Mr. McBride: That is why we set up Information Canada.

Mr. Baldwin: I hate to interrupt the right hon. Prime Minister when he is speaking in this House, and I even hate to interrupt his thoughts when reading them on paper. But if the right hon. gentleman's idea of freedom of information is envisaged as Information Canada, he has a long way to travel.

Mr. Gibson: Would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Baldwin: May I please finish what your great and noble leader said? Perhaps when I have quoted him the hon. member may have lost the need to ask his question. Again I quote:

Democratic progress requires the ready availability of true and complete information. In this way, the people can objectively evaluate their government's policies.

Disclosure of Government Information

I am sorry I have to laugh, Mr. Speaker. Here is the final paragraph in that quotation:

To act otherwise is to give way to despotic secrecy.

Now, if the hon. gentleman has a question I am quite prepared to listen to it.

Mr. Gibson: Do you not think that setting up Information Canada and going slowly with it—not rushing in with a great big, fast, hastily organized pattern—so that all departments can integrate into the plan is a better way of doing it, rather than rushing into a hastily ill-conceived plan?

Mr. Baldwin: I would agree. I would never want to accuse the government of rushing into anything.

Mr. Gibson: What about the War Measures Act?

Mr. Baldwin: The approach of the Prime Minister and of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) does not indicate that they are rushing with any degree of dispatch to deal with problems of unemployment. I suppose that is an assumption, but I say to the hon. member who asked me the question that certainly it is susceptible to that interpretation. But knowing the government, how it operates, its disposition to autocracy and secrecy, its refusal to give this House and the people of Canada the facts to which they are entitled, does not lead me to have confidence that its intentions with regard to Information Canada are strictly honourable. I have this feeling about it and I hope I am wrong. I would love to be able to stand up here a year from now and say how wrong I was, but that is one thing I know I will not have to say.

Mr. Gibson: Open your mind.

Mr. Baldwin: We have enjoyed these interruptions, Mr. Speaker. I have enjoyed them, but they were not very knowledgeable. The best alternative to knowledge is to keep quiet, listen and learn. The problem is present. To a great many people in Canada, Parliament and the processes of democracy are becoming increasingly irrelevant. The movement to violence is really the ultimate in that particular aspect of human relationship.

I am very serious when I say that the people of Canada and those of many other democratic countries are beginning to despair that they will ever secure from a combination of the democratic process and their system of government the type of needful reforms which are essential so they can say that progress is being made, that it may not be coming as fast as they would like but they are prepared to do their thing within the four corners of the democratic process. However, Mr. Speaker, that is not happening. I do not accept the view that progress is not being made with these things democratically. However, there is great justification for the feeling of many people in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom that we are not doing the things we should do and that people are not being told the facts they should