

Administration of Justice

There was no security involved in this matter; that has been made clear and made abundantly clear by the hon. member for Kamloops. If there had been, the Prime Minister of Canada, a diplomat, Her Majesty's minister, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for External Affairs at the time in question, enunciated the proper course to be followed.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to say more at this time. I do not know what the terms are, but I do point out this: This is a matter that cannot be shelved by the executive to the judicial, to get rid of a matter that affects the rights, the privileges and the prerogatives of members of parliament.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Not at all. What a court or what a judge might look at is not the criterion. The criterion is, so far as members of parliament are concerned, that we in the discharge of our responsibilities do these things; we bring about, in a continuity of discussion the preservation of freedom and the assurance of the preservation of the state. That is our responsibility.

The judicial inquiry is set up to do what? To try me on the basis of a letter written to the Prime Minister that the Minister of Justice did not have—well, I do not want to use the word that might be used to describe that. As a matter of fact, when I think of some of the statements made here I begin to think that we are living in a new age of palaeontology—political palaeontology—the invertebrate age, which is government without a backbone.

Instead of standing up and saying, "This is it" he writes the Prime Minister and says, "This is what I want you to look into. I do not want you to look into what I said, the allegations that I made, or the infamous suggestions I have spread about. I do not want you to look into that. I just want you to look after him. That is all."

Mr. Speaker, I shall have more to say when we have available to us this order in council.

Now I come to one concluding reference, and it has to do with parliament. I started off by saying that I love this institution. Our debates are not acrid. Eggshell sentimentalities in the House of Commons are foreign to the British house. I could give quotation after quotation to illustrate the power of invective. As a matter of fact, Lord Hailsham who gave up his title, who is now Mr. Quinton Hogg,

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

said that invective was of the essence; it is the tool of debate.

Mr. Speaker, think of the great debates in the British House in the last 15 years between Aneurin Bevan and Sir Winston Churchill. They did not regard things said in the course of debate, things which were strong, powerful, and sometimes overwhelmingly unjust, as personal things. Those things did not interfere with their friendships. They had that sentiment for parliament; that creation of the English and the French, and for the first leader of our Mother of Parliaments, Simon de Montfort. What about that concept, Mr. Speaker? Think of the occasion, Mr. Speaker, when Sir Winston Churchill made his speech in the House of Commons, I think in the year 1951, when he was followed by Mr. Aneurin Bevan, when Mr. Bevan said, "Mr. Speaker, I shall puncture that bladder of falsehood with the poignard of truth." There were none of these eggshell sensitivities that we are starting to display.

Mr. Speaker, I think of an occasion that I have never forgotten. It was at a dinner at 10 Downing Street. A lady, Mrs. Chamberlain, was sitting beside me. My wife and I were the guests. My wife sat to the right of Prime Minister Macmillan and to her right sat Sir Winston Churchill. He was very happy that evening and I finally forgot myself to say to Mrs. Chamberlain, "He is very happy tonight. He does not usually come out any more." She said, "I am so glad. If it had not been for him we would not be here."

Of all the expressions of viewpoint, Mr. Speaker, after he had been driven from his position of Prime Minister, the one that sums it up best is a short speech by one of the most famous of British parliamentarians, Cromwell, who said, "In the name of God, go." Sir Winston Churchill had been driven out. He took his place in the opposition front benches and there were bitter words.

I visited that British House over and over again. I saw it in 1916, in the month of December, when Churchill got up to speak and the house emptied. They would not listen. I saw it again in 1936. It was an adverse house. Those were the times of the clashes between Baldwin and Churchill. But they maintained the one thing that is essential to the preservation of parliament and everything it stands for. What they maintained is that while one may disagree and strongly disagree, and while we have a responsibility as members of the opposition to bring out that which is wrong and have it cleared