

Ministerial Conduct

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pearson: I heard that broadcast, Mr. Speaker, and I asked the hon. gentleman's office for the text and could not get it. But I got the transcript of it, and I have written to him and asked him to produce the evidence on which he charges members of the government with lack of integrity, and of course I have not heard from him.

Mr. Dinsdale: Mr. Speaker, in reply to the Prime Minister's comment, I answered his letter three days ago.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pearson: He may have answered but it is still in the office.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Dinsdale: On a question of privilege—

Mr. Diefenbaker: The Prime Minister forgot for three months.

Mr. Pearson: Let me quote the hon. member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Hamilton), speaking in this house, as recorded at page 6368 of *Hansard* of this year when he said—

Mr. Dinsdale: On a question of privilege—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There is a question of privilege.

Mr. Dinsdale: The Prime Minister has suggested that letter is still in my office. I will be very happy to supply him with a copy of that letter, which left my office three days ago.

Mr. Pearson: I have not received it. Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Qu'Appelle had this to say when a certain question was raised in the house concerning the propriety of the conduct of a member of the house, and I do not think the hon. member for Qu'Appelle has seconded this motion today:

He picks out a little section out of context—a little something which he hopes will be of some advantage to his mind, that lives in a sewer.

The hon. member for Qu'Appelle was referring to an hon. member on this side of the house. Then he went on:

I would simply point out to hon. members on the government side that if they ever try to stir up any thoughts which are not based on the facts, they destroy themselves.

These are very good words to apply to hon. members who make this kind of motion in this context, and I would say to my right hon. friend, who is a great authority on quotations, perhaps he will recall a quotation from Confucius—

[Mr. Pearson.]

Mr. Coates: Stop the smokescreen and give us the facts.

Mr. Pearson:—perhaps he will recall the quotation from Confucius, "He who digs dirt loses ground."

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am also reminded that the same Confucius said "He who hides wrongdoing is a wrongdoer himself."

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the right hon. gentleman is he charging wrongdoing?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Oh, oh.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. D. M. Fisher (Port Arthur): Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest to Your Honour that the Prime Minister by his very argument has confirmed that we do need a debate on this particular matter. As a matter of fact we have been having it, and I think there is no clearer justification of the urgency than that instead of speaking to the urgency of the matter he immediately engaged in a debate.

We are bothered from the point of view that we consider other matters to be very urgent, but we also feel that there is some merit in the point of view that the house has not been taken into account so far as these explanations are concerned. I think all of us have been reading the public print on the matter and I think we recognize, or at least assume, that the Prime Minister has been carrying on some investigations into this matter.

Therefore we assume that the government and the Prime Minister would welcome the opportunity for a brief debate so the ministers and the Prime Minister could indicate very clearly the details of the matter to us in our forum, rather than in a press conference where you get a different coverage and quite often an incomplete coverage. I hoped that the Prime Minister in speaking to the urgency of this question would have indicated that the government was willing to accept the motion so as to clear up these details. I certainly feel that the question of a charge is a subterfuge on the part of this government—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Fisher: Well, look at what happened yesterday. I do not believe in rehashing things, but if hon. members want this on the