

*Administration of Justice*

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Yes—a security risk. Then he said she was dead and buried. What a resurrection, Mr. Speaker? Within a matter of minutes she had turned up. Does this not indicate that there is something wrong in the Department of Justice if this person was in any way considered a risk? In West Germany, where they are naturally fearful of this kind of thing, she was able to continue working for several years without being identified until one of the stellar newspapers was able to locate her.

Just imagine, Mr. Speaker, smear, slime and insinuation against two or more former ministers. I believe that according to those in official circles they now number four. Did the minister dare stand up in the House of Commons to say this? Not he. He wrote a letter to the Prime Minister, in which he said:

My dear Prime Minister:

On Friday, March 4th, as recorded on page 2211 on *Hansard* I stated that the Leader of the Opposition "was accusing us of hiding the truth, of hiding evidence from the committee."

I added that he was "the very last person in the house"—

—and so on. The letter continued:

To this the right honourable gentleman replied "I am not worried. Have your commission look into it. Put it on the agenda".

I have subsequently indicated that the Leader of the Opposition had failed to place the file on this case before the law officers of the Department of Justice for their advice—

I would ask the Prime Minister whether he finds shortcomings in his ministers. Does he ever have any complaints about them? To those that write in slanderous terms, does he say "I think this is a slanderous suggestion and I will turn it over to the law officers of the crown"? If we are going to start this, Mr. Speaker, we will destroy democracy; because all of us know, human nature being what it is, that we have to meet face to face from day to day, and these things are never brought out.

Then the minister went on to say in the letter:

I have alleged that the Leader of the Opposition mishandled this case and that he failed to seek the advice of the law officers of the Department of Justice.

The hon. member for Kamloops (Mr. Fulton) has answered that once and for all. Then the letter concludes—is it a postscript?—in this way:

I have made and make no other charges.

What of his statement, Mr. Speaker? What of his two press conferences? What of his allegations, his smear, scuttlebutt, slander and smut?

Instead of coming before the house the minister writes a letter to the Prime Minister and says: "You are of age; tell them about me". This, Mr. Speaker, is the most unusual thing that has ever taken place in this house in all my years in public life. They have made their examinations under a microscope. I do not say that everything I did was right, but what I do say, Mr. Speaker, is that what I did was honest.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** When we came into office, Mr. Speaker, it was immediately suggested that we might look over the records of the cabinet. After all, they had had their divisions in 1955 and 1956. But I said, not one look or one peek; not one file and not one examination. That is the British tradition, and I followed it 100 per cent. I do not say that I would not have liked to know some of the observations made by some hon. gentlemen sitting opposite when they were on the treasury benches in regard to some matters, but that is not the British tradition. We do not snoop.

**Mr. Byrne:** Except Nielsen.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** We do not slither. Not one examination was made of one line, either indirectly or at all, by me or by anyone on my behalf. Nor was any report thereof given to me. To do otherwise is to undermine the very essence of our democracy.

• (4:10 p.m.)

Now, Mr. Speaker, had there been any evidence that the security of the state was undermined, what would be the proper course to follow? I go back to 1957. I am not going to refer to the case, because I do not want to resurrect the name, a tragic name which will affect the wife and family of the individual in question and exacerbate their natural feelings. However, I am going to read what the present Prime Minister said on page 3493 of *Hansard*, for April 12, 1957:

It has always been a principle and I think, a correct principle, of our security investigation that we would not deal publicly in connection with a security inquiry with the details of any allegations made, for the reason that the details of a man's private life should not be the subject of accusation and rebuttal in public. The reasons behind this principle are I think obvious; it might well do far more harm than good, to the man in question, and it might cause results which would be unfortunate to all concerned without being of any assistance whatever to security.