

Interim Supply

used and he knows perfectly well that in the last hour of a session of parliament that question cannot be answered.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Perhaps it cannot be answered by the minister but he challenged me when I asked him—

Mr. Pearson: I challenged what you said yesterday.

Mr. Diefenbaker:—whether any information in this case had been wrongfully used; he would not say yes or no but he left the clear intimation which he now has had to withdraw and retract from, that such a thing had not taken place.

Mr. Pearson: Not at all.

Some hon. Members: Not at all.

Mr. Diefenbaker: And that being the case the whole basis for the statement the other day that from now the United States of America is to be denied information on security grounds entirely falls to the ground. We find that what actually took place was that the minister simply indulged in vehement language unbacked by experience or past fears.

Mrs. Shipley: Shame.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Chairman, the hon. gentleman having been completely wrong yesterday—and he made no reference to that statement—is wrong twice again in what he has just said.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pearson: I said in my statement the other day that the information in this case did not come from any Canadian source and how many times does he want me to say that?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Read the statement and you will see it.

Mr. Pearson: The hon. member was also wrong in saying that I have now said that because of that we will give no security information to the United States. I have not said that at any time. I said that if we did not get the assurances we required to make certain that this information is not wrongfully used we reserved the right to cut off information. On a matter of such importance not only to Canada but to our relationship with the United States why does the hon. member not endeavour at least to be accurate?

Mrs. Shipley: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Chairman, that does not answer the question. The other day in the words of his which I quoted the minister left the clear intimation that some of this information that had been furnished under

security regulations or in pursuance of security routine had found its way into the committee—

Mr. Pearson: Quite the contrary, quite the contrary.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Well, after all, the minister reads his statements. That statement was carefully prepared. His language is generally very clear. The words I quoted are—

Mr. Harris: Clear as can be.

Mr. Diefenbaker:—interpretable in no other way.

Mr. Pearson: Point out the words in the statement.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I read them.

Mr. Pearson: You cannot do it.

Mr. Low: Mr. Chairman, I hesitate to come between the minister and the Leader of the Opposition but I must say I got exactly the same impression.

Mr. Pearson: From what words?

Mr. Low: From the statement that was made by the minister the other day, as indicated by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Pearson: But from what words?

Mr. Low: The impression I got was that the big issue between the government of Canada and the government of the United States was leakage of information that was furnished by this country to the security agency in the United States. There was quite a lot of froth generated over it the other day and I am quite certain that a great many people across the country got the same impression.

Mr. Pearson: Quite the contrary, if you will read the words. I will read them to you.

Mr. Low: All right, I will give the minister a chance to read those words but I want to ask him one or two further questions in order that we might get this matter clarified. It is unfortunate to say the least that in the dying minutes of this session a matter of as grave implications as this should arise without there being ample opportunity to get it cleared away.

I would like to find out exactly what the issue is. Is the issue the information brought out in the investigating committee in the United States concerning Mr. Norman or is the issue the supplying of information on a confidential basis from our security people in Canada to the security people in the United States?

Mr. Martin: Oh no.