

Administration of Justice

extremely unfair and I reminded him that I was appealing to his sense of fairness to try and convince the Leader of the Opposition, if he deemed advisable not to resort to this type of tactics. But never, never was there any question of making public the Munsinger file. And then, I suggested an appeal also to the sense of justice of the Leader of the Opposition.

His last words—I remember that the door of my office was already ajar—were these:

● (3:40 p.m.)

[*English*]

“I’ll talk to him if it can help.”

[*Translation*]

He apparently did not feel the Leader of the Opposition could be convinced by an appeal to his sense and spirit of justice.

Mr. Speaker, when two contradictory versions of certain facts are given, other facts outside the conversations must be checked in order to determine which of the two accounts of such a conversation is in accordance with the facts.

The first thing I wish to say is that there was so little agreement, understanding or consultation between the present Minister of Justice and myself to bring about the conversation I had with the member for Kamloops, that the Minister of Justice was not informed that I wanted to have this conversation and I state before this house that he was still unaware of it on the very day the present Minister of Justice, under pressure from the Leader of the Opposition, said in the house—it was eight or ten days later, I think—that he called on the Leader of the Opposition to put on record his own handling of the Munsinger affair.

On that day, the Minister of Justice was not aware of the conversation I had had with the member for Kamloops. If that amounts to an attempt at blackmail, say there must be a lot of it, but not in this case.

Now, I have no wish to rehash the past, but I think that had I wished to use for blackmail the Munsinger affair, which seems to frighten so much the official opposition, I would have done so in other circumstances, a year and four months ago, when for a month I was crucified by the Leader of the Opposition and the member from the Yukon. It would have been easy, then, had I wished to use blackmail. And when would I have used it? Possibly before, possibly during and after the

[*Mr. Favreau.*]

Dorion inquiry, had it been in my character either to seek vengeance or to blackmail the opponents, on the basis of facts I was aware of, for I was aware of them at the time.

Well, that is when I would have done it and I think, Mr. Speaker, it will be recognized that, in the first place, there were no discussions between the present Minister of Justice and myself concerning the conversation I intended to have with the hon. member for Kamloops and that, before this day, I never mentioned it. And I dare any member of the opposition to say that I might have mentioned it. Never did I refer to the Munsinger case and the truth is that when I saw the hon. member for Kamloops, it was, as I said before, to appeal to his sense of justice, in which I always believed until this afternoon, when he publicly distorted our conversation.

My intention was to speak to him as a member of the Privy Council. That was, in my opinion, another proof of the confidence which, as he knows, I never stopped having in him.

It was another proof of that feeling of loyalty which I had always kept for him, since I had left the Department of Justice, a loyalty which as a matter of fact brought upon me certain remarks from politicians who felt that I was making too many favourable comments about my old boss, the former Minister of Justice, the hon. member for Kamloops.

That being said, Mr. Speaker, I shall not let myself be dragged into a discussion on the merits of the case. The government’s conscience in that regard is clear. I belong to a government which decided that a judicial inquiry would be held. The Prime Minister had just announced the institution of such an inquiry.

In fact, he has just announced the appointment of a prominent judge of the Supreme Court of Canada as chairman of this commission. In the circumstances, I am duty bound not to refer to the merits of the file, but, I repeat, I wished to correct the impression which may have been given, and I wish to tell the house again that I have never, but never, threatened the member for Kamloops. I repeat, I merely appealed to his sense of fairness.

[*English*]

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I do not rise