

Supply—National Defence

There is a great deal more in these quotations, Mr. Chairman, to which reference can be made on another occasion. But it is an amazing statement. We have the benefit in the House of Commons of a pundit in our midst.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Chairman, would the right hon. Leader of the Opposition permit a question?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Yes.

● (4:40 p.m.)

Mr. Trudeau: I seem to remember that some time in October the right hon. Leader of the Opposition, when he was asked about some of his straying ministers coming back to the fold, said to the press that the nuclear problem was no longer an issue at that time. I ask the Leader of the Opposition why he is raising this issue now.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That is a perfectly good question, perfectly reasonable. He should have spoken to the minister who took this up last night. He took it up and he filled the record with a lot of stuff last night, so I am just clearing it up. I hope that the hon. gentleman will get in touch with the minister and just whisper in his ear quietly, because it must be done quietly, to take care where you lead us.

I go on from there because these new members certainly know their stuff. The hon. minister of manpower to be—he is not here now—

An hon. Member: Yes, he is.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Oh, yes; he also took part in this testimony. This is a report in *Le Devoir*, and I am only going to give part of the quotation today because I want the hon. gentlemen to realize that these are just a few of the morsels that are available. What did this hon. gentleman say, because apparently the path of criticism leads to glory since the hon. gentleman has now become a minister? The article reads:

Mr. Marchand deplored the extreme weakness and chronic instability displayed by the central power when the country needs a strong government capable of having a suitable dialogue with provincial authorities.

The syndicate chief said that this weakness is taking on really disastrous proportions.

This statement was made last March. Certainly it is of interest to know his viewpoint. Then there is the hon. member for Hochelaga. I see he is not here. He is usually present so I shall reserve that quotation for another day. He dealt at length with this

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

question. It is tremendously interesting, is it not, because none of these things would have come out if it had not been for the minister's decision last night to smear the opposition. All I am doing is getting the record clear.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Surely no one will say anything to the contrary when I quote Liberal members of today, the reform group. I must make a reference to the hon. member for Hochelaga because he would object if he were not included. This statement was made in October, 1965, quite recently. This was a joint effort by the member for Hochelaga and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister:

Without being alarmists . . . the undersigned nevertheless believe that there is a certain urgency in Canada. If federal affairs continue at the rate they are now going since the last two years, within a short time the results would be harmful to Canadian political unity.

Who was in office when they wrote that? Then, in 1963 the hon. member who daily excoriates members of this house and who sits in solitary splendor as he contemplates the failings of democracy and writes about them, said on August 17:

Sam Lubell, political analyst, naively thought that once in power, a politician still owed a certain respect to logic and decency. He did not know Mr. Pearson; nor did he know us.

I have quite a number of further quotations and I will use them on the appropriate occasion, but I just wanted to lift the curtain a little so that the minister would know that when he attacked us last evening it made it possible to clear up the record, and not from the lips of those who sit in the opposition but those who are close to the powers that be.

After those few preliminary remarks I may say that I am going to reserve for later any attempt to deal with some of the matters to which the minister referred. I can just see him as he looked towards hon. members sitting in the opposition, whether within this opposition or those to the left, and said that morale was never higher in the armed forces. I say to the minister: If that be so, then why the letters that are received on every hand, why the fear in the hearts of people in the armed forces that unless they qualify to be kept they will be removed? The rules regarding removal are tremendously interesting.

I am going to ask the minister to table the rules and regulations that provide the basis for removing men and women from the armed forces. There is nothing in those rules that will do any harm to national security.