

Privilege—Mr. Diefenbaker

Mr. Trudeau: The right hon. gentleman asks, "Is this a spontaneous falsehood?" He is admitting he is making a mistake about my reading.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: If he wants to be gracious and say that he made a mistake in fact, then I will sit down now. The hon. member is shaking his head.

Mr. Diefenbaker: There was no mistake.

Mr. Trudeau: It is an erroneous statement to say that I read entirely from a script. It is true that in the last minutes of my speech I did read from a script, and hon. members opposite will remember that I galloped through it; but the whole of the first part was not read at all. There were a few notes I had gathered, not sentences. The right hon. member wanted to attack Mr. Pitfield, and I would say in a most disgraceful way for a former prime minister.

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. Trudeau: The former prime minister talked about the rights of parliament. He should have learned that civil servants have rights too, and that they should not be attacked.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I didn't. I simply said that he was your Damon or your Pythias.

Mr. Trudeau: The right hon. gentleman said that Mr. Pitfield had obviously inspired me to say these things. Nothing could be further from the fact. The things I had to say about the right hon. gentleman I thought up myself, and I still believe them.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: I say that because of the one error I did make. I want to make clear that it was my own, that I am responsible for it and that no one on my staff or anywhere in the government inspired me to make that mistake. The right hon. gentleman went on to say that I had broken an arrangement, presumably by speaking first—

Mr. Diefenbaker: That statement was never made by me.

Mr. Trudeau: —or by speaking too long.

Mr. Diefenbaker: You were allowed to speak first, out of courtesy because the Leader of the Opposition felt that as Prime Minister you should go first.

Mr. Trudeau: The right hon. gentleman says that statement was never made by him. Let me read, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): He doesn't remember.

Mr. Trudeau: —from *Hansard* of May 27, page 6152:

MR. DIEFENBAKER: On Thursday last it was understood between the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) and the government, in respect of the debate that was to take place, that 15 minutes would be allotted. The Prime Minister asked to go first.

Mr. Sharp: That is not true.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

Mr. Trudeau: Not only is it not true, but a few minutes ago he said that he had never even made the statement I just read.

Mr. Goyer: Apologize.

Mr. Trudeau: The right hon. gentleman chides me because I do not remember things that happened 55 or 56 years ago, but he cannot remember what happened last week.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: I do not forget my age, though.

Mr. Trudeau: It is entirely wrong, therefore, to say that an arrangement was broken by me, as he said. There was no arrangement. The truth is that I, through the House leader, made it clear to the opposition that I preferred not to speak first because I wanted to know what they were going to attack me on or question me about. That is why at the outset of my speech I made it clear to the House that since they wanted me to speak first, since they were not taking that privilege, and since I did not know what they were going to ask, that is the reason I dealt with certain serious matters and some which were not serious and of a petty nature which were constantly brought up by hon. members opposite.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: But where the matter becomes serious is, after alleging that I broke an arrangement, the right hon. gentleman said that it was with the intent of preventing the opposition from either speaking or taking time. I believe that in parliamentary language this is called imputing motives, and I raise my own question of privilege at this time. I would ask the right hon. gentleman to withdraw that statement in which he imputed to me the motive of trying to prevent the opposition from speaking.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: It is as a result of innumerable interruptions and points of order such as we saw when I was speaking that I did speak a great deal, and it is because I had no text in front of me that I was fairly lengthy in my speech and decided to stay on another 35 minutes beyond the time I said I would leave. I did not hear one single question during that time.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: So, Mr. Speaker, I register with you this question of privilege and I ask the right hon. gentleman to withdraw this imputation of motives against me.

To go on, the right hon. gentleman then said that I said an hon. member was fraudulent. I did not say that. I said that an hon. gentleman had made fraudulent use of statistics and I hoped that it was not intentional. Even when he could have read last week's *Hansard* and even on a question of fact the right hon. gentleman cannot get the facts right, yet he complains that I made one mistake.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!