

*Question of Privilege*

later issues did *La Presse* start publishing rumours and stories gathered here and there during investigations made by a team of newspapermen who had been sent looking for scandals about the former minister without portfolio. I think that can be called a trial by newspapers.

It was then that appeared in this Montreal daily, the largest French daily in America, big headlines reading as follows:

Deslauriers admitted handing over the \$10,000 to minister Yvon Dupuis.

Nobody was grieving yesterday in Quebec city. Is it Lesage who asked for the head of Yvon Dupuis?

Kierans had sent the Dupuis file to Favreau.

Deslauriers will reveal the whole racket.

The R.C.M.P. acted before Yvon Dupuis.

And so on. It was obvious to any outsider that a well planned press campaign had been staged against me by means of those two French Montreal dailies and of a few other newspapers. It was also plain from those articles that somebody, somewhere, was interested in telling his or perhaps their own version of the story in order to disparage me in the public eye.

Mr. Speaker, I must say here that most papers throughout Canada acted with great prudence and moderation concerning my resignation and the reasons which brought it about. Most of them just asked questions and frankly admitted they could not provide the answers. I am sure that when I am through with my remarks the editors of those newspapers will congratulate themselves for having observed such prudence and objectivity until now. As for those who tried everything to soil my reputation, I hope they will have the honesty and the elementary decency of correcting their mistake. One thing is sure: they will never be able to make up for the wrong they did me and for the injustice they did to my family and to the electors of St. Jean-Iberville-Napierville whom I am proud to represent in this house.

Since I resigned two main questions have remained unanswered. I shall answer them today in the course of my brief comments. I hope my colleagues will understand that it would be impossible for me to summarize in just a few sentences all I will have to say to explain to them the reasons which led me to hand in my resignation to the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) on January 22. I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to bear with me if I have to speak longer than I might wish to.

Because of all the gossip and rumours that have been going around since my resignation,

I know that the two main questions being asked here and there are the following:

Did Yvon Dupuis exert undue influence concerning a race track in St. Luc, in the county of St. Jean?

Did Yvon Dupuis receive a gift of \$10,000 from the hands of Dr. Deslauriers, the promoter of this race track?

I will therefore answer both questions.

I must say, in the first place, that it is true that between April 1961 and February 1962 I helped to carry out a project for the development of a pari mutuel race track which was to be built in St. Luc in the St. Jean constituency. I did so at the request of the promoters, Messrs. Roch Deslauriers, Albert Ariss and Yves Papineau, three St. Jean constituents. I co-operated in the interests of my county as did my colleagues of the Quebec legislature Messrs. Hamel, of Iberville, and Baillargeon, of Napierville. I looked after that important project when my friend and colleague, the member for St. Jean in the Quebec legislature, Mr. Philodor Ouimet, convinced me that I should support his undertaking. I must point out that at that time I consulted Premier Jean Lesage who strongly encouraged me to endorse this project and to co-operate with my former colleague of the Quebec legislature, Hon. Paul Earl, who was then provincial minister of revenue.

**An hon. Member:** Co-operative federalism.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Dupuis:** In 1961, I thought, and I still think so, that it would be an excellent thing to build a race track on the south shore of Montreal. I was happy at the thought that such a project might be carried out in my riding. I felt this new industry would contribute to reduce the great number of jobless we had at the time in St. Jean, Iberville, St. Luc and the vicinity. Moreover, and contrary to what certain persons claimed, there was nothing secret about that project. Everyone spoke about it with great interest, including the newspapers, and the idea appealed greatly to the population.

It can be seen by the documents I have before me that very important and very representative people have openly expressed their opinion, as I did, in favour of that of that race track.

Many of them wrote to Mr. Lesage in 1961 to let him know that they were giving unqualified support to the project. I have here copies of letters that were written by the mayor of St. Jean, Mr. Jean Desmarais, lawyer, by the municipal council of St. Luc