

Supply—Justice

Mr. Chairman, there was a complete denial on October 13 by Mr. Lesage himself that there was such a report. I continue quoting:

Mr. Cardin replied that Mr. Diefenbaker would not be bound by his oath if he wanted to see the Sefkind file; he would be able to use his discretion and make public any information he found about persons in public or political life.

• (1:40 p.m.)

Asked about this aboard his campaign train yesterday, Mr. Diefenbaker broadened the issue by saying he also wanted to see the file of correspondence between the Justice Department and Judge Bruce J. S. Macdonald when he was chairman of the Ontario Police Commission.

He said: "Mr. Cardin does not make it clear that all the files are going to be made available to me. I doubt if he can give me that right, as most of the files would be marked secret and as a Privy Councillor I could not reveal them. I don't want selective files. I want all the files on this subject—

I want this, I want that. How far has the right hon. gentleman strayed from the original so-called secret file which was so important at that time? It seems to me the only file we had was the Mercier file which was in the right hon. gentleman's possession at the time the house was sitting. Members opposite have been going around the country pretending there was this other file. They object when I say they are toying with the truth. The reason I use that expression is that if I were to really say what I think it would not be parliamentary. I agree there have to be political differences but there must be a limit somewhere.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Would the minister say when the Mercier report was tabled? He has been talking about it.

Mr. Cardin: On August 19, 1965.

Mr. Bell (Carleton): The house was not sitting then.

Mr. Diefenbaker: We were not sitting.

Mr. Cardin: It was tabled on August 19 in the Quebec house and it was a public document.

Mr. Pickersgill: It was a public document.

Mr. Cardin: The right hon. gentleman thinks he has a great point. I apologize for having made a mistake. The fact is that it was tabled in the Quebec house on August 19 and it is a public document, so it could not have been a secret report.

Mr. Diefenbaker: The hon. gentleman said it was tabled in the House of Commons.

An hon. Member: They are making an awful mess of it.

[Mr. Cardin.]

Mr. Cardin: Well, perhaps.

Mr. Pickersgill: Certainly of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Cardin: All members of the house have a responsibility when it comes to combating crime and the terrible things which have happened in connection with bankruptcy. People with the prestige of the Leader of the Opposition have a tremendous responsibility. We all have a responsibility to try to assure the Canadian public that we have this problem under control or, if not, that we are doing our best to deal with it. But it is altogether wrong that any responsible member should let it be said that the government is abrogating its responsibilities when the facts are to the contrary.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That is what Mr. Kierans said.

Mr. Cardin: I have given an example of what happened in the case of the Mercier report—the accusations that the government had been lax, almost criminal, in its activities. These are serious charges. Are we now faced again with new tactics that I see arising among the Conservatives—striking hard, preferably below the belt, and then running away?

Mr. Churchill: What did you do in February, 1962?

Mr. Cardin: Only a short while ago the hon. member for Yukon stated in a press conference that he had important information on fraudulent bankruptcies. This is what appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on February 9:

Erik Nielsen, the man who sparked the Dorion inquiry said Monday he has enough information on fraudulent bankruptcies to justify another inquiry of equal proportions. The Progressive Conservative M.P. for the Yukon told a press conference that there is a definite connection between the frauds and political campaign funds. He said he will present his evidence to the House of Commons when he returns to Ottawa later this week.

Asked if he would include names with his evidence, he replied: "Yes, I have a list of both companies and individuals involved."

He said he has information on fraudulent bankruptcies in British Columbia and Alberta but will concentrate his attack on operations in eastern Canada. Under the Bankruptcies Act the frauds could be investigated by the R.C.M.P., he said, but in the past the force has been prevented by the government from carrying out some investigations.

I submit that these are extremely important charges. Here is a categorical statement by the hon. member for Yukon that he has definite knowledge that the government has prevented the R.C.M.P. from acting in cases