

Morality in Government

which he did not reveal to me and which, in the light of later revelations, could only come from these files that we are talking about?

Mr. Robichaud: On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member tried to make such an accusation last night which I denied personally, and again I would ask him to prove it.

Mr. Starr: You are all denying everything.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my first reference will be one of agreement with the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) on the statement he made early in his remarks regarding parliament. He pointed out that everywhere parliament is being judged, that criticism is strong of parliament, that this is nothing novel, that we in Canada face criticism and that in recent months there is hardly a newspaper in the United Kingdom that has not spoken out against parliament.

This has become a course of action. It has become a standard practice. This has been the situation throughout the years. Parliament has always been condemned but, strangely enough, parliament, condemned as it has been, carried out its mission in two world wars and preserved freedom.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I think those who would change it and bring about an alteration of its mission, those who are everlastingly arguing that it should be reformed, fail to recall its functions, fail to recognize that while in the course of debate strong arguments are used all of us recognize that our political opponents are individuals who are trying to do what they can for their country, and we do not have recourse to secret police to undermine and destroy the reputations of our fellow members.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I have before me a copy of the *Daily Mail*. I am going to quote only a very few lines in this connection from an article headed, "Reform It Now—The House of Decay, Incompetence and Fully Justified Ill Repute". The article says in part:

... the House of Commons is today in a state of decay incompetence and fully justified ill repute, worse than at any time since the worst days of George III.

Then it goes on to say that parliament, referring to the parliament of Westminster,

year by year is sinking in the general regard of the people. I do not believe that. I could not be more in agreement with the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin) when he spoke last evening. With his long years of experience and being now removed from politics—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Diefenbaker:—he was able to speak of parliament in an objective way and, indeed, in a manner that indicated that he has not the eye or rather the ear of the Prime Minister, for the things that have been done cannot be laughed off.

The Prime Minister produced a chestnut regarding truth which has been used over and over again, usually in county councils. I am glad the Prime Minister found it necessary to resurrect it. We want the truth. We are asking for the truth. I listened to him today and I could not help but go back to that momentous day in April, 1963, when he said that what was going to come was "a time to excite the daring, to test the strong, and to give new promise to the timid". There was none of that today. There was an apologia, a speech that consisted in the main of confession with avoidance of responsibility. He has placed the commissioner of the R.C.M.P. in the dock and has in effect said of him that his evidence was false.

Mr. Pearson: Not true.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I want to make that very clear and I am going to quote from it.

Mr. Pearson: Not true.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am not going to generalize. I am going to quote from it.

● (4:20 p.m.)

Sir, I would have thought he would have risen and said—he couldn't have done it though—well, we all in the course of life suddenly under the impetus of the moment act in a way which is contrary to our whole being. As a sort of revelation, the evidence before the commission shows that what was done, in spite of all the elaboration in words, was calculated and contrived to annihilate political opponents, and this by a Prime Minister who talks of the new politics.

An hon. Member: New, all right.

Mr. Diefenbaker: He wanted to use this as a club; that is what he wanted. He applauded the Minister of Justice (Mr. Cardin) on two