

when he had the interview this morning with the press, speaking for the government or was he speaking for himself?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Flemming: Is it usual for ministers of the Crown to call in—

Mr. Fairweather: He is not a usual minister.

Mr. Flemming: —the press; and is it usual to hold press interviews without consulting the Prime Minister?

An hon. Member: Sure.

Mr. Flemming: If it is, I say that the government is in pretty much the same position as the Minister of Justice, if they knew he was holding this interview and had some knowledge of what he was going to say.

Mr. Churchill: They are a party to it.

Mr. Flemming: In my opinion, the Prime Minister is doing a great disservice to this country if he does not demand that the Minister of Justice get to his feet just as soon as it can possibly be arranged and give to this house the basis of the statements he made this morning to the gentlemen of the press.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Starr: Come on, get up.

Mr. Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): Pearson, show some leadership, will you?

Mr. Dinsdale: Mr. Speaker, a few moments ago I endeavoured to rise to speak to the question of privilege and I was denied the opportunity because it was said we were dealing with a point of order. I do not know where we are now, but I trust I can speak to the question of privilege at this time.

Mr. Speaker: Order. There are only four minutes left, so I suppose there will be no difficulty in allowing the hon. member to speak for the last few minutes. I have some qualms about whether there is a prima facie case of privilege in the matter raised by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), but there is so little time left that I am prepared to allow the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale) to speak.

Question of Privilege

Mr. Dinsdale: I rise, Mr. Speaker, because during the course of the day certain gentlemen of the press have been asking whether I was involved in the Munsinger case. I make that point to reinforce the statement already made by my colleague, the hon. member who is my deskmate, and because I believe an accusation has been made against certain hon. members which puts a blanket of suspicion over a good many members of the House of Commons.

I also rise in my place because this is the second time—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Dinsdale: There is so much laughter coming from the Liberal side of the house that I can hardly hear myself speak.

Mr. Ricard: They are irresponsible over there.

Mr. Dinsdale: This is the second time that I have been attacked in the house by a Minister of Justice and charges have been made along these same lines. It seems to me that there is some conspiracy going on in the government ranks, and the close cohesion of the Liberal backbenchers in their noisy, vociferous response to everything that comes from the government side tonight substantiates that viewpoint. Before I was attacked in the house I had intimation from an honourable minister of the Crown that they were going to attack me, they were going to get me and other hon. members of the former Diefenbaker government.

The first intimation I had that I was going to be attacked was a question put on the order paper by the hon. member for Hamilton West. I believe a statement must be made, an accusation having been made in the house, that pinpoints the specific charges, otherwise the only conclusion to which I can come is that the grand conspiracy to engage in a wholesale witch-hunt and character assassination on the part of the government is still under way.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, I know it would be unusual, but we are the master of our own rules and regulations and if the house desires to give unanimous consent we could pass a resolution at once which would enable the government to set up this committee immediately.

Some hon. Member: Hear, hear.

Some hon. Members: No.