

Morality in Government

not to be too concerned. I thought it was in connection with my vote on the flag issue. They said: Surely feelings will not be carried to the extent of wreaking vengeance against a member of the house for the stand he took on a particular issue. But it was more than coincidental, I would think, that the two incidents occurred on the same day. It would suggest there had been discussion going on in cabinet circles involving certain members of this house.

Nothing further was heard until early in the new year a series of questions appeared on the order paper involving a certain citizen in the city of Brandon who was concerned with the Chinese immigration investigation. It surprised me that these questions were presented not by a member who had been in the house for a long period—

An hon. Member: Nor by a minister.

● (5:40 p.m.)

Mr. Dinsdale: Nor by a minister. The member concerned, the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Macaluso), had not even been in the house while the Chinese immigration investigation was under way. But the questions remained on the order paper for quite some time, and it was not until March 4 of the following year, 1965, that I came under direct attack in the house by the then minister of justice. I replied to the charge on March 5, 1965, because I was not present in the house on March 4, being engaged in delivering a speech in the city of Montreal on the day when the accusation was made.

Mr. Nielsen: Where did the backbencher get his information?

Mr. Dinsdale: This is what I am leading up to, I assure the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). We had to take the situation as it developed at face value and, as I have already intimated, I wondered why the hon. member for Hamilton West, who was not present in the house at the time the events took place, was the one who placed these questions on the order paper.

As a result of the attack in the house several stories appeared in the press, and I think I can best summarize the matter in the words of the story which appeared in the *Toronto Star*, written by the late Norman Phillips, one of the highly respected members of the press gallery. The headings of that story were: "Under Attack For Liberal Scandals They Dir For Tory Scandals" and

[Mr. Dinsdale.]

"Politics—Ottawa Style." The story read as follows:

The Buddy Leeds' case is the story of a Chinese restaurateur, an angry Prime Minister, and a misguided Minister of Justice. It could be subtitled: Politics, Ottawa Style.

The moral was provided by the Prime Minister one vexing December day before he even knew the Chinese restaurateur existed.

In an uncanny coincidence, Mr. Pearson quoted Confucius: "He who digs dirt loses ground."

The Prime Minister was angry on December 18 because a few days previously an inoffensive Conservative ex-minister named Walter Dinsdale had gone on T.V. with some pious pronouncements about the lack of integrity in high places.

Mr. Pearson's immediate reaction was to write a letter challenging Mr. Dinsdale to produce evidence or make a specific charge.

As I already intimated, I replied immediately to his letter, and I should point out that in a later exchange the Prime Minister denied receiving my reply and I had to send him an additional copy. But that is incidental to the main theme. I continue to read the Norman Phillips article.

Ever since the Conservatives had unearthed the alleged \$20,000 bribe offer from a government executive assistant and had forced the setting up of the Dorion inquiry, the Liberals had been digging frantically through the files for instances of Conservative wrongdoing.

The search yielded a letter written by Mr. Dinsdale on August 17, 1960 on behalf of a Chinese constituent, Yuen Bak Lee. A popular figure in Brandon, Manitoba, where he runs the Litchi Gardens on Princess Avenue, he is known to local citizens as Buddy Leeds.

Mr. Phillips very fairly reviewed the whole case and dealt with the part played by the hon. member for Hamilton West in the affair. Then he moved on to the next important step in this whole plot on the date already referred to, March 4, when the then minister of justice launched a personal attack against me in the following words, and I am quoting the Phillips story:

"I will call attention to one forgery case," Mr. Favreau began, "where a charge was made and a parallel case of conspiracy instituted—the case of Buddy Leeds."

He read from the Dinsdale letter and explained the charge had been withdrawn, one year later. The inference was that there had been political interference with the course of justice.

"There have been other cases," Mr. Favreau said ominously. "There have been a few, quite a few."

The use of the Dinsdale letter was quite out of character for the embattled justice minister, who has a reputation as an eminently fair man.

He attacked Mr. Dinsdale on a day when the latter was not in the house to defend himself.

As Andrew Brewin, (N.D.P.-Greenwood) put it: "I think the Minister of Justice does himself no good by calling the kettle black, if that is what he was trying to do."