

The Address—Mr. Diefenbaker

attacks. I could answer them, but I am not going to get down in the gutter with the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Pearson: That is where you have been for years.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I say to the Leader of the Opposition that it has been a concerted effort on the part of the Liberal party and was declared to be such by one of them. It was stated that everything would be done in order to personally attack me.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Diefenbaker: They know it is a fact.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Will the hon. gentleman permit a question?

Mr. Diefenbaker: I will give the hon. gentleman the information. I think he is the one, himself.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Does the right hon. gentleman know of anyone—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Does the right hon. gentleman know of anyone who was more personally abused—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Martin (Essex East):—than the way the minister of finance abused the Leader of the Opposition?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I do not think the hon. member for Essex East should proceed with a question unless the Prime Minister yields the floor. He knows this is the rule of the house, and I did not see the Prime Minister yield the floor.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I wish to state this, that criticism is essential in the democratic process, but the organized deluge of defamation and adjectival abuse that has been heaped upon the government of this country and myself as leader has never been equalled in the history of Canada. I am going to place the record here. Yesterday, as I listened to the Leader of the Opposition, I had to compliment him for his restraint in not saying inside the house, when he is face to face, what he said outside when all that he faced was Liberal supporters. I want to compliment him on that. Never before has there been the equal in vehemence and virulence displayed in public affairs in this country. I realize that in the heat of debate we often say things about one another we wish we had not said. But, sir, when speeches are prepared in advance and handed out by the Leader of the Opposition in Toronto and also in Sorel, I say to him—

Mr. Pearson: Put them on the record.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am not going to spoil the record with that.

Mr. Pearson: What a phony attitude. Repeat them; put them on the record.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, it is very obvious that I have touched a tender spot. They show a disregard for the accepted amenities of political controversy. I point out also, and I am just doing it so there will be no misunderstanding, that in 1921 when Right Hon. Arthur Meighen was abroad at a conference equivalent to the prime ministers' conference, Mr. King disagreed with the stand that was being taken. However, he had that appreciation of the amenities that he said nothing until Mr. Meighen returned. Mr. Meighen followed the same course during an occasion when Mr. King was abroad; for after all the prime minister represents the people of Canada. If there is disagreement with that policy one expects criticism, but one does not expect a continuation of the kind of policy that the Leader of the Opposition and those associated with him have followed, of personally attacking.

As a matter of fact I should thank him, because I have had lots of correspondence from people who have said, "I cannot understand Mr. Pearson; I never knew he would engage in the kind of thing in which he has engaged since the last election."

Mr. Pearson: On a point of order—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition on a point of order.

Mr. Pearson: The point of order is that the Prime Minister has accused me of making a personal statement of criticism and vilification; and using other adjectives, in connection with these statements made outside the house. I ask the Prime Minister to substantiate that allegation by putting this statement on the record inside the house.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I am too old for that. When defamation takes place, do you repeat the defamation against yourself?

Mr. Pearson: Put up or shut up.

Mr. Harkness: That is in character.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am suggesting the Leader of the Opposition apparently secured his idea of free speech from the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate and indirectly from the premier of Newfoundland.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege, since the Prime Minister has chosen to draw me into this matter. My