

Inquiries of the Ministry

Therefore in the circumstances and in view of the discussion I would respectfully ask the hon. member for Qu'Appelle to withdraw.

Mr. Hamilton: Mr. Speaker, I think I made my conditions known. I asked quietly for an answer from the President of the Privy Council and it was not given to me. I know the Prime Minister's statement leaves aside the real issue. I am not talking about this film particularly; I am simply trying to get an answer to the question. Until I get that answer I think my rights have been infringed, and I have no recourse but to say my conditions are unchanged and I will leave the course of action up to you.

Mr. Speaker: I know very well the hon. gentleman, whom I respect and have respected ever since I had the privilege of meeting him; and without in any way wishing to imply that I am dodging the issue—because I am not dodging the issue—in view of the statements and countercharges and allegations and questions asked yesterday and today I do think it is reasonable for the Chair to be allowed some time to examine this matter carefully. I do not wish to make a wrong decision or to render injustice to either side, but I think the Chair is taken somewhat by surprise. It is my responsibility, but I should like, over the week end, to go into this further and consider the matter carefully. Therefore I will take it under consideration.

Mr. Pearson: Well, the Leader of the Opposition suggested that one way of clearing up this particular allegation would be to have a showing of this film for members of parliament. I hope that can be arranged, and that this can be done without interfering with the C.B.C., who have custody of the film. I will take the right hon. gentleman's request to the C.B.C. and join in that request that this film be made available to members.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That shows the benefit of discussion, Mr. Speaker. The other day there was suppression. Now we are to get the film, possibly, if the Prime Minister can direct the C.B.C.—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Pearson: I resent the right hon. gentleman's words. There has been no suppression. I said in this house a week ago that whatever decision was made by the C.B.C. I would gladly accept it. If I had told the right hon. gentleman at that time that I would ask the C.B.C. to make this film available he would

then have accused me of interference, as he is doing now.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: On a question of privilege—

Mr. Pearson: I have the floor and wish to complete my remarks.

Mr. Speaker: I can only say I am very glad I do not have to attend caucus any more.

Mr. Pearson: Now, Mr. Speaker, to complete my statement—

Mr. Diefenbaker: On a question of privilege, the Prime Minister may wave his hand—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Prime Minister was, I believe, completing his statement, and I do not know on what ground the Leader of the Opposition is rising.

An hon. Member: He is annoyed.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am not at all annoyed. I am, rather, amused by the Prime Minister.

An hon. Member: Calm him down.

Mr. Speaker: Let us take this in sequence. First, the Prime Minister.

Mr. Pearson: Since I am going to be accused of interfering with the C.B.C. whatever I do or do not do, I agree that the C.B.C. should be asked to show the film to members of parliament. And in view of what has happened this morning I hope I shall not be accused of interfering with the affairs of the C.B.C. if I get in touch with the president of the corporation and express my own view that this film should now be exhibited publicly.

Mr. Diefenbaker: On a question of privilege, the Prime Minister a moment ago adopted the fighting attitude of Bonnie Dundee. Well, Bonnie Dundee had some influence. The Prime Minister does not exercise the same influence. He now says, after ten days of soul searching, that he will get in touch with the C.B.C. to find out whether they might produce this film and allow members to see it. Well, we have got that far along the road. Now we want the Canadian people to see it.

An hon. Member: That is what he said.

Mr. Diefenbaker: The Prime Minister is the one who stopped this being shown.