

*Privilege—Mr. Diefenbaker*

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### PRIVILEGE

MR. DIEFENBAKER—SPEECH OF PRIME MINISTER ON PRIVY COUNCIL ESTIMATES

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. Even though sometimes things are said in the cut and thrust of debate that ought not to be said, I am not one who suffers from eggshell sensibilities. I can understand that in the cut and thrust of debate statements are sometimes made that all of us wish had not been made. That observation does not apply to a speech delivered on Thursday last by the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). I was ready to raise this matter on Friday but the Prime Minister was not here. Yesterday I was unable to be present owing to circumstances beyond my control. I am, therefore, raising the matter today so that there will be no loss of my rights and the rights of the House to be protected against diatribes and statements which bear no relationship to the facts.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** On Thursday last it was understood between the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) and the government, in respect of the debate that was to take place, that 15 minutes would be allotted. The Prime Minister asked to go first.

**Some hon. Members:** No.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Lang:** That is not the fact.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I have touched a nerve over there, Mr. Speaker. I have not read the whole of the speech. In order to explain the fabulous, wasteful and profligate expenses, the Prime Minister decided to follow the practice which is sometimes followed—of producing something in place of the facts. He referred to me as a fisherman. I have fished in various parts of the world, and it is of interest—

**Some hon. Members:** Order!

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, I have never had such audience participation.

**An hon. Member:** You got yourself some suckers this time.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** The statements made regarding myself, while they cannot be described in this House of Commons in the words of Machiavelli—although the Prime Minister has always claimed that Machiavelli was in fact his political godfather—Machiavelli said that lies have their position; lies when used are bound to be useful. I have pursued this statement. The Prime Minister was in a position of endeavouring to explain how it was that his staff had increased five-fold since he took office in 1968, and the budget of the Prime Minister's office and that of

[Mr. Speaker.]

the Privy Council Office had increased 39 times to almost \$20 million.

I mentioned fishing, Mr. Speaker. There is a fish in Fiji—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I do not want to unduly restrict the right hon. gentleman, but there is a tendency to get into debate as opposed to a question of privilege. I wonder if the right hon. gentleman would mind making his point.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** This is just an example I wanted to give, Mr. Speaker. There are fish in Fiji that when in difficulty exude a black fluid to conceal themselves and their position.

The Prime Minister made a number of statements that I am going to quote. Commenting on the fact that he has two \$80,000 cars at his disposal, he said:

I just remember, when the right hon. gentleman suggests that possession of this car—

He should have said "these cars."

—shows signs of paranoia on my part—

I never said that, Mr. Speaker, but I am not surprised that he came to that conclusion. He continued:

—that it was he who, at substantial public expense, had the bomb-shelter built at 24 Sussex Drive.

He went on to say:

The point is that he had that bomb-shelter built at substantial public expense.

Now, sir, I start with that.

**An hon. Member:** Start?

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, is there nothing that can pacify these guilty souls? This expensive bomb-shelter was placed there as a result of a decision made in various parts of the world. The fabulous cost of the shelter to which the Prime Minister referred was estimated in the beginning to be \$1,100 and, according to the Department of Public Works yesterday, ended up at \$400. The Prime Minister compared that sum with the expenditure of \$160,000 for two dreadnoughts. The speech became worse as it continued. The Prime Minister then said, as recorded on page 6010 of *Hansard*:

● (1510)

—the right hon. gentleman talked about Harrington Lake. I think that was another unfortunate reference, because I suppose he made the largest land grab when he was in office that was ever made by any private citizen of Canada. He did so when he decided that Harrington Lake and the buildings on it should be the country residence of the prime minister. I do not think anybody then sitting on my party's side of the House criticized that decision. He was adding thousands of acres of land for his private enjoyment.

I could not understand that when I read it in *Hansard* the next day.

I had nothing whatsoever to do with the purchase of that land. The purchase was made in 1951 by the federal district commission when the Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent was prime minister.

**Mr. Baldwin:** Justin was right.