

Proposal for Time Allocation

intelligence of which the minister has spoken? Are these men endeavouring to bring this nation to a position of degradation by their stand? What has happened here has been that this government, and more particularly the minister, has been playing politics with the defence of this nation.

Mr. Hellyer: Absolutely untrue.

Mr. Diefenbaker: As I said before, and I repeat, defence is being used as a platform for personal ambition.

Mr. Hellyer: Absolutely untrue.

Mr. Diefenbaker: It is easy to say this is untrue but the facts tell the story. No amount of denial can get away from it.

Mr. Hellyer: You tell the story but you don't know the facts.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Now, Mr. Chairman, we have the admission. Those who tell the story don't know the facts. If you can equal that for a statement of positive self-satisfaction and egotism, it is your move. What manner of person is this? The minister has a divine right. Who are these people who do not know the facts?

Mr. Hellyer: No, I said you do not know.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Look at me, the minister says; I have them but I am not going to tell parliament. This has been his attitude and when finally he found himself in an impossible position he attempted the strategic course of bringing about closure. The Minister of Public Works (Mr. McIlraith) says it is not closure; we have changed the name. It will have the same result, but let us be careful about the use of that word. It may be a synonym but it is not closure. Sir, never could a minister equal the vacuity of that last statement the minister made in his interruption. They do not know the facts.

Mr. Hellyer: That is not what I said; I said you do not know. Mr. Speaker, I want to make it more specific, I do not want a general statement—

Mr. Diefenbaker: But I am saying what they have said. I am not one who glorifies my position, as the hon. gentleman does, by setting myself apart. Oh, what a statement that was. Everybody else has lost his intelligence but he has his own God-given intelligence. Today he says "they do not know the facts". Then, he amends the statement and says "I do

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

not know the facts". All I know is what I read in the evidence. Every solitary bit of the evidence that was given, I have read. If ever there was a case made completely against what is being produced here for the political deification of the hon. gentleman, this is that case.

What is being done is this: Here is what we are going to do, he says, and he submits his case without argument. You have got to take it because if you do not, then with the assistance of my colleagues I am going to bring about a vile repetition of 1956. I am going to push this measure through. I am going to push it down the throats of Canadians regardless of their feelings because I have the God-given intelligence that is denied to the generals, admirals and air vice marshals as well as to the men and women who serve in the armed forces and who write me daily saying that they hope the opposition presses on. They do not want their names mentioned or they will be destroyed. This is what is happening in this nation. They have every reason to be afraid because after all they only occupy the ranks of private, lance corporal, corporal or sergeant or equivalent ranks in the other services. What has taken place in this nation as a result of the manipulations of the government in this connection is that men and women in the armed forces are full of fear and foreboding. They do not dare speak out. They have been overwhelmed with the 48,000 copies of the speech of the minister duly annotated, decorated and engrossed. Each one of them knows what will happen if he dares to speak out.

On June 7, 1965, the minister put out another press statement reading in part as follows:

The command structure of the Canadian armed forces has been redesigned on a functional basis, in keeping with the principles and objectives outlined in the white paper on defence of March, 1964.

He has done nothing of the kind. The white paper never envisaged the tinkering and interference that have taken place or the results that are today flowing from that action. The press statement ended in this way:

The new command structure, which reflects the major commitments assigned to the forces by the government is the product of careful study by the defence staff. Major field commanders of all services have been consulted in detail on the plan which is four months ahead of schedule.

This statement, sir, is not true. If this government tramples on the right of parliament to information about why this change is being made, what our international commitments