

Supply—Privy Council

The organization has worked as assiduously to influence Conservatives as Liberals. It is doing so today.

Perhaps this thing should have been allowed to lie or to be forgotten, but the suggestion has been introduced by this propaganda that somehow through the secretary to the cabinet there is a means of influencing the government with regard to radio policy in the interests of this particular lobby. It seems to me that makes upon the holder of the position and the link he has with the cabinet a reflection that needs a denial, that needs some statement by the government that this is nonsense. It seems to me that as long as this particular legislation is before parliament and until the new set-up gets going, there will be a continued campaign by the private interests against some of the aspects of it.

If this is a part of their campaign it is a part that calls in question, I would say, the loyalty of and suggests bias on the part of the cabinet secretary. That is most unfortunate. I do not know what anyone can do about the way in which it comments upon the first representative of the crown in this country, but I certainly think the Prime Minister should be in a position to deny completely any suggestion or implication that the cabinet secretary has been influential in giving the Canadian broadcasting league any special "in" with respect to influencing the cabinet.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I think the whole thing answers itself, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Pearson: It certainly does.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am really not in a position to police the thinking—and I hope we never arrive at the point where we do so—of people within the civil service of this country. I cannot follow this at all; I do not understand what is the essence of the document or of the representation made. I feel that more attention has been given to it—and I am sure the hon. gentleman agrees with me—than is merited by the article in question, or the representation that was made in some document produced here.

Mr. Fisher: Mr. Chairman, I do not mind being brought up short by a sort of suggestion that it is almost useless to raise this matter. I say that there has been a comment about a man who is very close to the cabinet. When we are considering these estimates I just thought the point ought to be made—and I am just making the point that it is wrong for this kind of statement of propaganda to stand; not that you can stop it, but surely trying is worth while.

[Mr. Fisher.]

Mr. Herridge: I would like to ask the Prime Minister a rather delicate question. I hope he will not misunderstand my attempt to be helpful as he misunderstood me on a recent occasion. Would the Prime Minister tell the house the date when the details of the arrangements for Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret's visit to Canada were made?

Mr. Diefenbaker: I do not have that information, Mr. Chairman, but I must say if I were in the position of having such information I would be possessed of something far and beyond my memory's capacity. I have no records in that connection.

Mr. Herridge: Just on that point, might I ask a second question. In view of the fact that Her Royal Highness, during her farewell address, expressed regret that she had not had the opportunity of visiting the provinces of Manitoba, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland, and in view of the fact that information given to me indicates that these arrangements were made some time ago, could the Prime Minister tell the house the reason why arrangements were not made for her to visit those three particular provinces?

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am unable to answer that question. A hospitality committee was set up and the arrangements were made based upon the desire to ensure Her Royal Highness of a suitable and satisfactory visit to Canada. The fact is that not only were three provinces omitted but many urban centres which would very much have liked a visit from Her Royal Highness were also omitted. The hon. gentleman will recall that in the latter part of her remarks when she spoke to Canada the Princess said that she would look forward to coming back and to visiting these three provinces. At that time, I am sure, every opportunity will be given to her to see those parts of Canada which on this occasion, because of the limitation of time, she was unable to visit.

Mr. Fisher: There is one point which I previously tried to bring to the attention of the Prime Minister in an attempt to find out something about the possibility of a discussion or any other sort of debate at some time with respect to the Canada Council and its activities. As the Prime Minister knows, we cannot really even ask questions about the council—it is rather out of order—but I do know that one of the main reasons for the way in which the Canada Council was set up was that it should be removed from all political interference.

There are, however, a number of interesting points which have arisen—at least in my mind—in connection with the council. I am thinking specifically of the institutions which