March 11, 1968

Supply—Secretary of State

In this connection, I would remind the honmember for Villeneuve, for the benefit of the hon. member for Lévis (Mr. Guay) that before 1962, when we did not have any member in the house, when we were in the same position as that referred to by the hon. member for Lévis, the hon. member for Villeneuve and I were saying that nothing represented in the House of Commons, was not a sufficient reason to be deprived of the news services from the C.B.C. Any ideology should be freely expressed. It is after elections that public opinion makes itself known.

Mr. Caouette: I wish to point out that before the election, the C.B.C. never asked us to express our views or to say anything. On the other hand, when the disagreement arose, we had actually been elected by the people, whereas neither Mr. Bourgault nor Mrs. Ferretti were and will ever be elected.

Mr. Grégoire: I admit that they were not, but I am not a prophet any more than the hon. member for Villeneuve to say that they will not be. Just wait and see.

The hon. member asks me whether I admit that before 1952, we had never been asked. I will not say "never", but I agree that even without a single elected member, we were far from getting the publicity we were entitled to. We were told at that time, as the hon. member for Villeneuve will remember, that the Ralliement Créditiste would not get a single member elected. But we got 26 elected.

And now, the hon. member for Villeneuve says: You will not get a single member elected! He will admit with me that by saying that we will not get one member elected—

Mr. Caouette: I mean at the federal parliament.

Mr. Grégoire: We do not intend to run for the federal parliament and the hon. member knows it. But he must confess that he is using now the same arguments the Liberals used at that time. I would ask him to show his good faith by calling on him, in any event—

Mr. Mongrain: May I ask my hon. friend a question?

Mr. Grégoire: Of course.

Mr. Mongrain: Mr. Chairman, would the hon member for Lapointe not make a distinction between what is usually called newscasts, interviews, forums or expressions of opinions which are presented as being the opinions of most people?

Mr. Grégoire: Of course, Mr. Chairman, one must make distinctions in all that. But whether on news programs or elsewhere, all ideologies have their place.

If a political party, for instance, even one not represented in parliament by a member, brings together in a convention 1,000, 1,200 or 1,400 persons in Quebec only, that is news.

The member is asking whether I admit the difference. I also admit that all ideologies must have access to the opinion programs, for these ideas must be presented to the public. I think that all ideologies have a right to both kinds of programs, opinion and news.

Mr. Chairman, I think my answer satisfies the member for Villeneuve. He has suffered enough discrimination from the Liberals, before 1962. As I am personally aware of the situation, I think he is satisfied with my answer.

When you have been in the same situation, Mr. Chairman, you understand what I mean. The hon. member for Villeneuve knows what I mean when I say that even though we did not have any elected representative before 1962, we represented an ideology. The fact that we did not have any elected member at that time did not prove anything, since we had 26 elected later on. I hope there will be as many in the future.

Mr. Caouette: But we did not have any before.

Mr. Grégoire: We had some after. People believed in that theory, since we had 26 members elected. That, we know afterwards. But beforehand, we should not try to stifle ideologies.

• (9:20 p.m.)

Mr. Chairman, I am now reverting to the point I was dealing with. What worries me most is that a general manager of the C.B.C. should send "confidential and urgent" messages condemning on ideology because the name of a certain person or that of his movement were mentioned a certain number of times—28 times, I think—in the space of ten days, three weeks or a month.

In my opinion, that is not right. If some-body wishes to have such inquiries made and to quote figures, this should be done for all and in an honest way. I do not see why such messages should be sent confidentially, since the public must be interested in knowing these figures.

The proof is that the hon. member for Villeneuve and I myself have already put on the