

Interim Supply

tion now coming from the government should not be available to the Canadian public generally and should not be available to the press generally, but should be available only to that section of the press which has shown that it supports the Conservative party. The Minister of Agriculture recently went out to Edmonton, and a reporter from the *Edmonton Journal* asked him to make a comment on negotiations with red China. The minister said it was pure speculation and declined to say more. However, in the Canadian Press dispatch we find the following:

Later Roy Faibish, Mr. Hamilton's special assistant, said the minister might have spoken if the *Journal* had not criticized the government on the day Mr. Diefenbaker visited Edmonton during the federal election campaign.

We suggest that in a democratic country the government has no business to try to discriminate between newspaper media just because the editorial policy of one particular paper happens to support one party or another. That is a further indication that this government is interested not in fair play, not in a policy of disseminating information in a fair way, but says rather that if it is a Tory newspaper reporter who calls up, he gets information. Mr. Faibish went on to say this:

But if someone from the *Toronto Globe and Mail* calls and the caller is known to be informed, he gets comment.

However, if it is from a paper that is not favourable to the government, it uses the iron curtain and brings it down over government or public information. I have in my hand a document which I think constitutes a serious indictment of the Conservative party. It comes from the headquarters of the Conservative party in the province of Saskatchewan. We know that the Minister of Agriculture is very close to the Conservative association in Saskatchewan. At their last executive meeting held in Regina he was in attendance and played a very prominent role. In order that this letter may be on record, Mr. Chairman, I should like to read it:

Saskatchewan Progressive Conservative Party,
Provincial Headquarters—McGowan Building,
122 - 2nd Avenue North, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.
Martin Pederson,
Provincial Leader.

J. D. Leishman, President,
802 Medical-Dental Bldg.,
Regina, Sask.

September 28th, 1962

Dear Supporter:

As you were selected to do the enumeration in your poll for the June 18th election, we would like to ask for your helpfulness again.

Will you please check the enclosed voter's list, and indicate after each name, to the best of your knowledge, whether P.C., Lib., N.D.P., or S.C. The 1962 vote result is shown at the top of the list as

a guide to select the various supporters. This is an arduous task, and even some names for each would be a great help.

The voter's lists are going out to each poll in the province to ascertain these details, and your co-operation in returning the completed list as soon as possible would be greatly appreciated. An addressed envelope is enclosed for your use.

Please indicate, where known, who the poll clerk was, also the scrutineers and workers in your poll. Thanking you very much for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Lawson W. Procter,
Provincial Organizer.

Mr. Ricard: What is wrong with that?

Mr. Argue: Conservative members are asking, what is wrong with that? This kind of question indicates the mentality of hon. gentlemen opposite who seem to take the attitude that enumerators should be part of the political machinery of the Conservative party when these officials are appointed under the elections act and paid out of the public purse. In order to illustrate their belief that these people should be part of the Conservative political machinery the letter says it is being sent to every poll in Saskatchewan and it is addressed to, "Dear Supporter".

Mr. McCleave: Will the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Argue: I believe that this is something that should not be done; I think it is a mistake. I believe this is a misuse of our democratic processes. These people are paid with public money and they should not be asked to inform on their neighbours, to give political judgments or to indicate the political persuasion of the people whom they enumerate and place on the voters list.

Hon. gentlemen opposite seem to think this is a very fair and proper procedure. They are interrupting—

Some hon. Members: Order.

The Deputy Chairman: Order.

Mr. Argue: Hon. gentlemen say this is fair, and I suggest—

The Deputy Chairman: Order; the hon. member for Vegreville.

Mr. Argue: Mr. Chairman, I have the floor and I do not think it should be handed to somebody else.

The Deputy Chairman: I am sorry, I was under the impression the hon. member was raising a point of order. If the hon. member is just asking a question, the hon. member who has the floor can refuse.

Mr. Argue: The hon. gentleman can ask his question when I conclude, and I will be happy to answer it. I believe this attitude of the Conservative party in Saskatchewan, which