

Supply—Agriculture

real gust of fresh air. I am delighted that he has this attitude. I want to know a bit more about how he is going to set about doing it. I should like him to be a bit more candid about the difficulties he faces. I should like to know if he has the authority from the Prime Minister, and those people who stand around the Prime Minister as advisers, such as the head of the national Liberal organization, to go ahead so we can get rid of patronage in this department and proceed on the basis of talent and competition. This is what we would like to know.

I have heard repeatedly ministers of this government and the one before, and in my reading I have seen records of other government members, get up and give assurances they were going to start things new and clean. They were not going to go along with all these old traditions.

Mr. Benidickson: You have seen the Saskatchewan record.

Mr. Fisher: What about the Saskatchewan record? Are we talking about Saskatchewan?

Mr. Benidickson: You have seen the Lloyd record?

Mr. Fisher: I have just discovered that Ross Thatcher has a pal here. I did not think he had many over on that side of the house. It is a good thing to know he has one.

My point is that, in so far as government agencies that have legal work are concerned, it seems to me that this work should be allotted to lawyers on the basis of talent and competition, and that there should be a scrutiny for the purpose of being sure there is talent at work. This is the promise the minister gave us. However, just as he gave the promise, the hon. member for Yukon read into the record a communication indicating that there is an inherent policy on the part of the government—I do not say the official government but I am thinking of the Liberal party as the government—to ensure that there is complete domination by Liberal partisans of the legal work done for government agencies.

It seems to me the minister needs to tell us a bit more about where he stands in this case. I am sick and tired of the Liberal party taking the stance in this country that it is the party of administrative genius and purity, especially when we get this kind of evidence. I am willing to accept the fact that the minister is untainted by these practices. I want to know that he has the authority to do something about it. I was told by a Manitoba member that all the P.F.A.A. inspectors in

[Mr. Fisher.]

Manitoba were replaced by Liberals after the election. As a matter of fact I have an informant in Manitoba who told me the same thing.

Mr. Hays: I can assure the hon. member, Mr. Chairman, that this is not true.

Mr. Fisher: That is not true; I am delighted to have the minister put that on the record.

Mr. Pigeon: Same old bunch.

Mr. Robichaud: The same with the information of the hon. member for Yukon.

Mr. Benidickson: Remember the Saskatchewan record.

Mr. Fisher: Mr. Chairman, if I could just rise above Ross Thatcher's buddy over there, I should like to say that the Minister of Fisheries interjected, "The same thing with the information of the hon. member for Yukon". I just want to say that the hon. member for Yukon indicated he possessed a letter and a record of some correspondence entered into by the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Justice affecting these agencies that come under the minister. The minister never denied that this correspondence took place. He did not say that he did not know anything about it, as I recall.

We are not innocents here. I have not heard the hon. member for Rosedale issue any denial. The hon. member for Rosedale who, the Lord knows, uses his mouth well enough at other times, has not rushed in to tell us this is wrong, that he did not send those letters. We have to assume that these are the facts, and that he did. Knowing the hon. member for Rosedale, and despite that magnificent talent of his that seems to be recognized so much by the party, I cannot believe he did this on his own authority. I know a parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Justice is important, but I do not believe he is that important. Obviously, this was the result of some kind of instructions from someone higher up.

It would seem to me that this being the case, we have an instance where there is a policy on the part of the Liberal party, as the government, which is in contradiction to the position the minister has given. I say, more credit to him. I was very pleased when the hon. member for Qu'Appelle went out of his way to compliment the minister upon his new broom approach to things. I should like to ask the minister, despite in a sense the clarity and cleanliness he may bring to this position through not having a past history in