

CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
COLCHESTER-HANTS CONSTITUENCY

Question No. 1,901—Mr. Kennedy:

1. How many public buildings does the Department of Public Works plan to construct in the constituency of Colchester-Hants during the next twelve months?

2. What is the nature of these buildings and where will they be situated?

Mr. Badanai: 1. Nil.

2. Not applicable.

**QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS
FOR RETURNS**

APPOINTMENTS TO TRANSIENT AND CASUAL JOBS

Question No. 1,715—Mr. Orlikow:

1. Do government departments, commissions, boards, etc., fill transient and casual jobs through the national employment service?

2. How do departments, boards, commissions, etc., which do not use the facilities of the national employment service, recruit personnel required?

Return tabled.

B.C. INDIAN COMMISSIONER—OFFICE
ESTABLISHMENT

Question No. 1,804—Mr. Barnett:

1. How many positions are authorized in the establishment of the office of the Indian commissioner for British Columbia?

2. How many of these are currently occupied?

3. By classified occupation what, briefly, are the qualifications and duties of each of those in the currently-occupied positions?

4. What is the authorized number of personnel of the Alberni agency?

5. How many of the authorized positions are currently occupied?

6. What, including an indication of whether this position is currently occupied, are the duties and responsibilities of each position authorized in the operation of the Alberni agency?

7. Who are the members of the crew of the *Skeena*, the vessel operated by the Alberni agency?

8. What are the duties and responsibilities of each of the members of the crew?

9. What other duties, in addition to acting as a member of the crew of this vessel, does each of the members perform?

Return tabled.

PRIVILEGE

MR. HAMILTON—REFERENCE TO REMARKS IN
DEBATE BY MEMBER FOR MEDICINE HAT—
RULING BY MR. SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. In the spirit of co-operation which we have had tonight, I would like to conclude one pending matter, which is a decision on a question of privilege raised a few days ago. I hope it will be accepted by the two hon. members chiefly concerned, inasmuch as we have discussed this matter together and I am convinced that the principle which I shall announce shortly is right. I hope both hon. members will be

Question of Privilege

satisfied, although it is not my purpose to satisfy hon. members as long as the principle is right.

On December 13 the hon. member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Hamilton) rose on a question of privilege, to the effect that the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Olson) had on the previous day stated the following:

Never before in our history has any member spent so much out of public funds in order to advertise a political party.

He stated that this was an imputation against his personal honour and against his activities as minister of agriculture. In consequence the member for Qu'Appelle asked not only for a complete withdrawal but a very strong apology as well.

In reply the member for Medicine Hat stated that if anything he said the day before could be construed by the hon. member for Qu'Appelle as being offensive to him personally, he would withdraw that, and he repeated the same statement later on. In the course of this discussion the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Neilsen) had this to say:

In so far as the question of privilege is concerned, when the remark was made yesterday by the hon. member for Medicine Hat I was quite astounded, because what he is saying is that the former minister of agriculture has misapplied public funds. In essence he is making a charge of fraud by misuse of public funds—

It is true, as the hon. member for Yukon said when he quoted Beauchesne's citation 108, that "libels on members have been constantly punished and scandalous charges or imputations directed against members are equivalent to libelous charges". I am not ready to agree that the remarks made in the course of the debate by the member for Medicine Hat constituted, in the words of the member for Yukon, "a charge of fraud by misuse of public funds".

There could not be any fraud because it is evident, and to everyone's knowledge, that every year large funds are spent by each and every department of the government for purposes of publicity. This expenditure may be directed toward giving publicity to laws passed by parliament, to orders in council, to regulations, to the work done in and by the different departments, to statements made by ministers at home or abroad in connection with their official duties, to social or political developments throughout the country.

There is no doubt, also, that all this government publicity under favourable circumstances, may react to the benefit of the party in power and to the ministers administering the different departments. Furthermore, if I correctly interpret what was in the mind of the member for Medicine Hat—this according to his own statements—his intention