

Supply—C.B.C.

On the other hand, Canadian history shows that cultural expansion and more frequent cultural contacts will not come about by themselves or through the sole efforts of individuals and private groups. The experience of other countries, with the possible exception of the United States, confirms our own. This is why I am convinced that our cultural life needs both protection against impoverishment and stimulus to improvement and that a deliberate effort to these ends, in which each sphere of government within its own jurisdiction will play its full role, is not only justified but most urgently needed.

Up to now I have tried to show the need for a cultural policy in Canada and what ought to be its general objectives. I should like now to indicate how it should attempt to reach those goals. In the first place, it should give assistance to individuals and private cultural groups—

Mr. Lambert: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, since the minister's staff has been kind enough to distribute copies of this speech to the press generally and to people in the officials' gallery, I wonder whether copies of this rather long and important statement could be distributed to the chief representatives of the parties in the house. After all, the minister is speaking to the house, not to the press representatives, and if he expects intelligent comment, which I think one can expect both from hon. members on the government side and on this side, copies of this statement should be made available to us. I am not singling out the minister in this regard because I have made this point to some of his colleagues. I have said before that if a minister is going to read a lengthy statement which has been carefully prepared and distributed to outside agencies, then certainly a number of copies should be made available within the house so members may comment on it with a little more care and preparation.

Mr. Lamontagne: Mr. Chairman, I was not aware that copies had been made available to the press, but I would be quite happy to have copies made available to the representatives of the parties in the house.

Mr. Lambert: It is not that I am complaining about the press getting it but rather that I should like members to get it too.

Mr. Lamontagne: I have no objection at all and I hope somebody will be able to take care of the matter as I go along.

I was saying that in trying to reach these goals a proper cultural policy for Canada would be, in the first place, to give assistance to individuals and private cultural groups to enable them to improve themselves and to travel and to perform in Canada and abroad. This is an essential element of a cultural policy in a society like ours which relies primarily on private initiative.

The centennial commission has begun to offer assistance for such purposes and I will have more to say about it on another occasion. The government is studying ways and means of fostering a feature film industry in Canada and I have already announced our intention to establish a loan fund, which we think would be very helpful. We have given a special grant to the Canadian conference on the arts to organize a seminar next February on the situation of the arts in Canada. This meeting will give us, I hope, an overall picture of the needs and requirements in this sector for 1967.

The Canada Council was established to help individuals and groups and it has done since 1957 a most remarkable job in spite of its limited resources. More recently it has been suggested that we should increase the funds available to the council. Others have proposed that the council should be restricted to the arts and that a national research centre for the humanities and the social sciences ought to be established. We are considering these various proposals at the moment and we will announce our decision in 1965.

In the second place, a cultural policy for Canada requires public cultural agencies in certain sectors where exclusive reliance on private initiative is undesirable and which fall within federal jurisdiction. These agencies must serve national purposes and help to develop the Canadian identity. They must be acceptable to the greatest possible number of Canadians, not only to the national capital or to a restricted group. They must reflect the true picture of our country and they cannot afford to succumb to extremism. They must encourage creation with due regard to administrative efficiency.

It is in the light of these and other requirements that a serious reappraisal is now in process. Two important steps have already been taken. A cabinet committee on cultural matters has been established and, for the first time in our history, all federal cultural agencies have been brought under the same ministerial roof. Moreover, as soon as the preliminary reappraisal is completed in each individual agency I intend to set up an in-