

*Supply—Secretary of State*

an Ontario member, but with all due respect, I think some opportunity should be given to areas beyond Ontario and Quebec.

I refuse to believe, for example, that in Vancouver, Edmonton, Regina and similar cities there are not establishments which have almost every facility which is needed to do this kind of printing, though I am aware that some of the modern presses equipped with the latest improvements may tend to concentrate in the eastern cities. However, much of the government's printing is very simple and involves the production of forms.

One of the other arguments I have heard advanced to explain why the contracts are so concentrated is that it is done on account of the low cost. That again bothers me, because it seems to me that certain parts of the country, for example Port Arthur, have mills turning out fine paper which is used right across Canada for printing. There are other paper establishments on the west coast turning out this quality of paper, so from this point of view of material availability there is no reason why printers in such places could not compete for some of this work if given an opportunity.

I suggest to the minister that we would appreciate it very much if when his estimates come before the committee next year we could see these orders which are now concentrated in Ontario and Quebec spread out into other provinces. Action by the department along these lines would be reflected in help being given to small printers in areas where such help is really needed.

One other point I wanted to make in connection with the operations of the queen's printer concerns the number of orders placed without competitive bids. This is a sheet running to 19 pages, and these lines are not double spaced. These pages list all the orders that were placed without competitive bids being sought between April 1, 1956 and March 31, 1957. We can appreciate that the queen's printer must do quite a bit of this, but the spectre that always arises is, how are these orders placed? I mean, what are the rules?

In leafing through the list I came to several conclusions. Perhaps the most important one is that again too many of these orders seem to be placed right in the Ottawa, Hull and Montreal area, and not enough in other places farther away. One is able to recognize that there might be a slight difference in cost, but I cannot see that it would be very great, especially when such orders are frequently for standardized products; and it seems to me the only extra cost would really be in writing letters to some of these firms.

[Mr. Fisher.]

I should like to know what the queen's printer is doing to spread more widely across the country these orders that are not placed by competitive bids. I should also like to know something of the ideas the queen's printer has in placing these orders. We would like to be assured that there is no question of patronage involved in this particular portion of the estimates of the department.

**Mr. Courtemanche:** Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the hon. member for Port Arthur for the kind remarks he has made. I have taken his remarks into consideration, and will strongly recommend to the queen's printer that these contracts be more widely spread across the country outside the two central provinces, and will try to correct the situation in the future.

**Mr. Fisher:** Mr. Chairman, I should like some information arising from some previous questions I asked relating to the daily check list published by the Department of Public Printing and Stationery. I had asked what was the value of free distributions in the last financial year with respect to full depository privileges and selections depository privileges for various libraries. I was told that the full value was \$35,000. This seems unbelievably small to me and I should like an explanation of it. Is that only for a partial year? It does not make sense because an institution like Queen's University has had full depository privileges for years despite the fact that the check list may have come out recently. I should like some information on that point.

**Mr. Courtemanche:** I am informed that the amount of \$35,000 was for the whole year.

**Mr. Fisher:** If \$35,000 covers the cost of all government publications sent to institutions over the course of a full year I should like to know how the figure is arrived at, because it is fantastically low in the light of the amount of publishing the government does. If you have 469 institutions which have selection privileges and approximately 32 institutions which have full depository rights, over a year they are accepting a tremendous number of government publications. If the value is only \$35,000 I want to know something more about how the value is arrived at.

**Mr. Courtemanche:** Except for 34 libraries which automatically receive all publications, the other institutions or persons authorized by law to receive them must make a special request for the publications.

**Mr. Fisher:** Let me get this point clear. Take Queen's University, for example. It has full depository privileges. There are approximately 32 institutions in the same