

Inquiries of the Ministry

expenditures, including Information Canada, are now running at the rate of \$1 million a week in this election year, will the minister undertake to review this situation with a view to saving public money, if not government credibility?

• (1440)

Mr. O'Connell: Mr. Speaker, we are starting at home. We are making savings in Information Canada, and we will be encouraging all departments to do that. But I want to point out that each department is autonomous in its own right in its information programming. I would invite the hon. member to look at what proportion government information expenditures represent of government expenditures and I think he will find that it is perhaps a quarter of one per cent of the total. We have a responsibility, which I am sure he would support, to inform Canadians about government programs and of their own rights to access to such programs.

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, does the minister consider that the Canadian people will get their money's worth from the \$10½ million budgeted for next year when this agency requires three weeks longer to make information available than was the case formerly when information was supplied by the individual departments.

Mr. O'Connell: Canadians still receive information from individual departments.

Mr. Hees: Three weeks late.

Mr. O'Connell: We have been taking a very close look at this and re-evaluating the time lag in supplying books and so forth. It is now down to about seven days. We are going to improve that. There is a cataloguing going on in the book storage centre over in Hull, and I think the information given out will certainly match the information given by the hon. gentleman.

Mr. Hees: As a further supplementary question—

Mr. Speaker: Order please. We will have to move to another subject. I am wondering, first, whether the hon. member for Bellechasse has a supplementary.

[Translation]

Is the hon. member for Bellechasse rising on a supplementary?

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I shall give the floor to the hon. member in a moment.

[English]

For the moment the Chair will recognize the hon. member for Fundy-Royal on a supplementary.

ALLEGED INEFFICIENT OPERATION—REQUEST FOR
TABLING OF DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S MEMORANDUM

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal): Mr. Speaker, if the memorandum is out of date and inaccurate, will the minister table it so that we can share his

[Mr. Mather.]

propaganda about the propaganda of Information Canada?

Hon. Martin P. O'Connell (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, the memorandum was an internal working document designed to stimulate discussion in the management group of Information Canada. I think the hon. gentleman would agree that it would be improper to table such an internal working document.

ALLEGED INEFFICIENT OPERATION—KNOWLEDGE BY
GOVERNMENT OF DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S MEMORANDUM
PRIOR TO BUDGET APPROVAL

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): Mr. Speaker, I too wish to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Labour responsible for Information Canada. Was the minister aware of the memo by the Deputy Director General of Information Canada, dated January 24, prior to the government's final approval of the almost 50 per cent increase in the budget of Information Canada?

Hon. Martin P. O'Connell (Minister of Labour): The answer to the first question is that I was aware of the memo this morning. With respect to the second part of the question, the increase is 11 per cent and not 60 per cent as reported in the *Globe and Mail*. It may vary depending on what lapsing funds we have this year; and we are doing a very thorough re-evaluation seeking economies within Information Canada.

Mr. Hees: As a further supplementary—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There are a number of hon. members seeking to ask supplementaries but we have not completed the first round of the questioning. The Chair will return to them later. The hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands.

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

FOREIGN INVESTMENT—STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF
INDUSTRY, TRADE AND COMMERCE—GOVERNMENT
POLICY

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the right hon. Prime Minister arising out of a speech made by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce before the Mid-America World Trade Conference in Chicago. According to the release from the minister's office the minister is quoted as saying:

Canada will remain one of the most open and secure locations for investment by non-residents.

I want to ask the Prime Minister whether the statement that Canada will remain one of the most open locations for investment by non-residents is government policy, and whether this is the policy which has been adopted by the government with respect to foreign ownership?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Well, Mr. Speaker, we never gave any indication that our policy would result in a prohibition of foreign investment in Canada in general or in any of the provinces in particular.