

this amendment in Bill C-2 which contains amendments to the Criminal Code and is presently on the order paper. I therefore beg leave of the House to withdraw the said bill.

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the House agree?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

Bill withdrawn.

[English]

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

### INFORMATION CANADA

#### ALLEGED INEFFICIENT OPERATION—SUGGESTED DISBANDING

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the right hon. Prime Minister. In view of the information from Information Canada that it is in total disarray and is without direction from the minister responsible, can the Prime Minister tell the House what specific action the government proposes to take?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the Opposition is referring to an item in this morning's paper—

**An hon. Member:** Leaked?

**Mr. Trudeau:** Yes, leaked. If the Leader of the Opposition is referring to an item in this morning's paper, I understand it is an internal memorandum prepared by officials for officials. It was not known by the minister or by the government. I can only say that if officials are engaged in this kind of self-criticism it is perhaps a good thing, better than having them circulate laudatory memoranda on the good work they are doing.

**Mr. Baldwin:** There is not much room for that, no opportunity.

**Mr. Fairweather:** The government does that.

**Mr. Stanfield:** In view of the information in the memorandum to which the Prime Minister has referred and the escalating costs of Information Canada as shown in the estimates tabled the other day, would the Prime Minister not stop this waste of millions of dollars of the taxpayers' money and disband Information Canada as it is now constituted?

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Trudeau:** I believe that at the outset the opposition parties received Information Canada as a great menace to liberty of information. They saw in it a potential propaganda machine for the government. I do not think they should be distressed now if the machine is not grinding out much propaganda.

**Mr. Orlikow:** But it is costing \$10 million.

### *Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Mr. Trudeau:** The process is not working as efficiently as we would like, and the memorandum bears this out. I do not think this government should refuse the challenge to set up efficient and well-operating information services. Practically every modern government in the world has them. I think that perhaps the people in this outfit were somewhat frightened by the fears raised by the opposition that Information Canada would grind out too much propaganda, and they perhaps have not been audacious enough in their approach to these matters.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Stanfield:** First of all, I should like to apologize if I have in any way terrorized the government.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Stanfield:** I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether, in view of the wide publicity that this leak has received, he can assure us that Information Canada will be in charge of all future governmental leaks?

#### ALLEGED INEFFICIENT OPERATION—REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE INQUIRY OR STATEMENT

**Mr. Barry Mather (Surrey-White Rock):** I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Labour who reports to the House for Information Canada. Having in mind the sorry state of affairs in Information Canada as revealed in the reported memorandum by its deputy director from which it would seem that futility and extravagance are about equal, will the minister either welcome an inquiry into the matter through an appropriate committee of the House or make an early statement on motions so that the country will know whether it is the government's intention either to straighten up or wind up Information Canada?

**Hon. Martin P. O'Connell (Minister of Labour):** There will be an opportunity in the appropriate standing committee to examine the programs and expenditures of Information Canada. I should also like to comment upon and answer the first part of the question which suggested extravagance. The report in the *Globe and Mail* is an inaccurate report. It skips one year in its comparison. It skips from actual spending in the first year of the new agency to budgeted spending for the coming year. Actually, the increase is \$1.2 million next year over this year, and that is more than accounted for by the increase in postage which Information Canada—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. O'Connell:** For the first time and because of a change in accounting rules the agency will be paying postage amounting to \$1¼ million. We are making savings in the total picture. Another \$1¼ million is for four new information centres at Halifax, Toronto, Vancouver and—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. For the moment the Chair will recognize the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock on a further supplementary question and then go to the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

**Mr. Mather:** I have a supplementary question for the minister. In view of the fact that government information