

Supply—C.B.C.

which will include the letters of all the prime ministers.

In anticipation of the completion of the new building, the book purchasing program of the national library is being expanded. In order to avoid needless duplication and to discover the most important gaps in the government's book resources, the national librarian, in co-operation with the chief librarian of the national research council is making a survey of all government libraries in order to secure up to date details of their collections and book purchasing policies. Although the national library gives first priority to the acquisition of publications relating to Canada, the ultimate aim is that in co-operation with other government libraries in Ottawa, it should provide a comprehensive book collection covering all major subjects.

The legislative measures which will be submitted to the house, the elaboration of new programs and the improvements to existing ones, should go a long way in fostering in Canada a new awareness of our immense intellectual and spiritual resources and in developing to the fullest measure our cultural potential.

The debate going on today in Quebec and throughout Canada gives ample proof that cultural and spiritual values transcend the more material exigencies of our Canadian existence. Many of the difficulties in achieving greater Canadian unity, a unity which must be based on moderation, good will and mutual respect, may be traced to a lack of cultural progress and to neglect of our more human values. Government policy in this field has many pitfalls. It must avoid the creation of state regimented cultures by doing too much, and it must beware of abrogating its true responsibilities by doing too little. The government must direct its efforts to assisting in the development of all our gifted creative talents and yet its cultural programs must be established in such a way as to assure a broad popular participation.

Culture has too long been confused in the popular mind with something exclusive, and pretentious. This situation only leads to a wider gap between the cultural level of a few and the cultural level of many. Our efforts should be directed to bridging this gap. Our aim should be to provide the catalyst whereby our diverse cultures, which find expression in many fields, from ballet to folk-dancing, from Camus to Leacock, can grow and flourish through more frequent contacts and exchanges. Government policy must also be directed to making the fruits of our cul-

tural achievements of greater benefit to more Canadians in more distant parts of the country.

The general program I have announced today constitutes not so much a radical departure from previous government policy as it reflects an awareness of the greater need in our complex and troubled society for greater cultural and spiritual efforts. This is a task to which all Canadians of good will must lend their efforts, in which both public and private groups must participate and in which, I am sure, hon. members will find common agreement.

Mr. Nowlan: Many of us have sat here in this place on Friday afternoons when estimates were being brought forward—usually a handful of members from the maritimes and from western Canada were present—and the function of the minister was to make as short an address as possible, to get as much supply as possible, and to have votes passed for as many dollars as possible. This has been the practice on Friday afternoons for a number of years, in fact for as long as I have been here.

This afternoon, however, we have seen a unique departure from that practice. We have seen a minister bringing forward a philosophical, a lengthy and, I will say, a learned and able dissertation on some of the cultural problems with which this country is faced. It is by way of a unique experience and it is an initiative on which I commend the hon. gentleman at this time. Certainly, what he has said is worthy of careful consideration.

Since it is now ten minutes to five, and since private members' hour begins in ten minutes' time, I am sure the minister would be horribly insulted if anybody attempted to deal at length with his estimates in the short time we now have left to us. I had thought the minister would follow the policy pursued by many of his predecessors, some of them seated on that side of the house and some on this, when we attempted to do as much as possible in such a short time. But since he has chosen not to follow that practice—and I am by no means criticizing him for this—any notes I had made on the administration of the C.B.C. would be out of place, at the present time and I do not intend to deal with the subject at any length.

The minister raised interesting questions with respect to cultural development and the development of the Canadian nation as such. I recall reading a paper some years ago by

[Mr. Lamontagne.]