

CIDA

for the last few moments. This is a large program, it is an expensive program and it is growing every year. International development is difficult. Development, even in Canada, is difficult; development in the Atlantic provinces is difficult. But it is much more difficult in the developing countries of the world which are just emerging into independence, which have new governments and low standards of living. We just cannot apply Canadian standards of management to these new countries; therefore, I do not think that every project will be a howling success. If hon. members think they will be, they are making a mistake. What we must do is exercise the best possible management and administration of these programs.

Since I have taken on this job I have been impressed by the dedication and energy of the officers of the Canadian International Development Agency who are administering these programs throughout the world. They are, I think, gaining for Canada a recognition and reputation which, if it is not the envy of the world, is at least the equal of any other country in the world.

I hope I am not giving the impression that everything in our development program is relevant to the very rapidly changing world in which we live. We have our programs constantly under review. Some of the comments made today as to the eligibility of countries are very much on our minds in reviewing our program. But aside from the review which is normally carried on, since I have become minister I have been conducting a rather fundamental review of CIDA programs and their relationships to all other aspects of government policy. We hope we can present at a future time a comprehensive policy to parliament and to the Canadian people which will explain, bring up to date and make more relevant our programs. I do not anticipate any miracles. We are working on this, and I hope at that time hon. members will be ready to scrutinize our programs.

● (1700)

Mr. Alkenbrack: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Having listened to the minister's comments with interest and heard him speak about the Cuba loan, may I ask, what is the interest rate on this loan?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I have the press release here; it contains all the details. I will be happy to send it to the hon. member.

Mr. Wagner: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Perhaps the minister will permit a question the answer to which may clarify his statement. Are we to understand that there has been no divergence of opinion as between the Minister of Finance and himself relating to the Cuba loan?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, this is what I said.

Mr. Wagner: Mr. Speaker, would the minister be prepared to table in the House correspondence or notes which have been exchanged between himself and the Minister of Finance on this topic?

[Mr. MacEachen.]

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend ought not to be drawn into believing that every letter presented for a minister's signature is signed and sent.

Mr. Wagner: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. My question was very precise. I am sure the minister did not intend to mislead this House and I am sure that he understood my question perfectly well. It was as clear as I could make it. Would the minister be prepared to table the correspondence exchanged between himself and the Minister of Finance relating to the divergence of opinion which existed between the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Minister of Finance, these notes having been exchanged in December, 1974? Is the minister prepared to table them?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, no, because the hon. member is still being sucked in to believing the newspapers.

Mr. Wagner: Mr. Speaker, on the question of privilege—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. Would the hon. member please resume his seat. I remind the hon. member that he sought the floor on a question of privilege. What he has presented is a dispute about certain facts, and that, as the hon. member knows, does not constitute a question of privilege.

[Translation]

Mr. Fortin: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): The hon. member for Lotbinière on a point of order.

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister said that members did not ask him questions although he came to the House quite prepared. The other day, I asked him a question on the management of a television project in the Ivory Coast. I did not receive any answer then. I asked the same question again in my speech a moment ago, and he did not answer. Can the minister tell the House what he intends to do with the request I made to him?

[English]

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, it is difficult in a debate of this kind to deal with specific projects and give details about personnel, their qualifications, their travels and when they arrived in the host country. This is a very interesting and important question, and once we get into committee I guarantee to the hon. member that every question he asks will be answered to the best of our ability.

[Translation]

Mr. Fortin: I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I have here a petition signed by thirty two Canadians on assignment abroad who demand immediate action by the government. I ask the minister—and I am going to give him a copy of the petition—whether he would order an investigation into the matter.