

they should think quite seriously of the functions it has taken over from other departments. I have already mentioned some of the new areas of endeavour, but I am now referring to the functions it assumed and to what the whole system of government as well as this House and all its members are very dependent upon. I am, of course, referring to the publication and distribution of government information-periodicals, documents of all kinds, the variety of which is evident when members look through the pink slips which they receive in the mail each day and pick and choose what they require.

This operation would come to a standstill if these estimates were denied, and surely this would be unthinkable in a parliament that wishes to be well informed and constructive in its debates and deliberations. So I do not really think that anyone would seriously entertain denying this agency the needed moneys to carry on its very essential functions.

In this connection I should like to mention something of which members may not be readily aware. When we talk about an over-all budget for Information Canada of something in excess of \$11 million, it should be remembered that in the distribution and marketing of government publications certain costs are recovered. The latest figure I have disclosed that during the last fiscal year, cost recovery from the sale of publications amounted to \$4 million. This is money recovered from the sale of governmental publications and goes directly into the consolidated revenue fund rather than appearing as an offsetting item in the estimates. Members should keep this in mind. A number of bookstores are being opened and the number has increased from about five to 55. During the next little while the allocation of agencies for bookstores will be up to 150, with urgent requests coming in all the time. Therefore, because of far more aggressive marketing, cost recovery from the sale of government publications will increase substantially over \$4 million.

There are just one or two other items I should like to touch on briefly, Mr. Speaker. Information Canada also has an expositions division which handles some 600 projects a year, including 150 domestic and foreign exhibits, at a cost of \$6.8 million. It operates on a full cost recovery basis with all the departments and agencies involved. Since there has been criticism of Information Canada, I might point out that Information Canada has won many awards for its expositions.

May I also refer to another function Information Canada has taken on, the federal identity program of which hon. members are aware. I am sure they have seen the maple leaf and bar design which is associated with all departments. It appears on trucks, stationery, and so on, and is becoming increasingly familiar throughout all cities in Canada. I think this serves a very useful purpose in a country such as ours, since it establishes a federal presence across the width and breadth of Canada, which as we know has regional problems.

In summary, I hope that the House will be agreeable to giving Information Canada a renewed mandate on the basis of the very useful and necessary functions it took over from previous departments at its inauguration, together with the very necessary new functions it is prepared to perform.

Estimates

● (2110)

Very quickly, I should like to answer one or two questions which have been asked about the rental of premises in Montreal. Let me elaborate in that regard. The rental paid by Information Canada, Montreal, amounted to \$21.40 gross per square foot, not \$25. As a result of the basic rate of \$20.24 per square foot there were renovations to the premises which accounted for an additional 2,000 square feet as the renovations included a mezzanine. This brought the gross cost down to \$21.40. That compared very favourably with other locations in the immediate vicinity, such as Place Ville Marie at \$21 to \$22 and the Marine Building, 1023 St. Catharine's Street, at \$32.85. Although the cost, in terms of comparable sites in the immediate vicinity, is certainly well justified I could go into further justification in terms of traffic and—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): If the hon. member is rising for the purpose of asking a question, I must advise him that this can only be done with unanimous consent.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, although I do not intend to take away from the time allotted to the next speaker. The minister said that all members of parliament depend on Information Canada. I draw to his attention the fact that there has been one exchange between Information Canada and myself, and on that occasion the shoe was on the other foot; they were seeking information from me.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Paproski: I should like to ask a question, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): I would suggest that the hon. member requires the consent of the House, as the minister's time has expired. The hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond (Mr. MacInnis) rose on a point of order.

Mr. Paproski: Then may I rise on a point of order?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Perhaps I should pass judgment on the point of order raised. In my opinion it was more an expression of opinion than a point of order. I do not think we should take advantage of points of order or questions of privilege to ask questions, especially when the time is limited. I should clearly ask the House if there is unanimous consent to allow the hon. member to ask a question.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Paproski: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I should like to ask the minister whether the sending out of Liberal party notices of meetings by the Department of Labour office in Hamilton is a function of Information Canada. We notice they have been sending out many notices for the minister in his constituency. Is that part of its function?