

S.O. 43

[English]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

ADMONITION FOR BELOW-STANDARD NEWS COVERAGE OF
DISASTERS—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Kootenay): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity, under the rules of Standing Order 43. It arises from the CBC coverage of the Pacific Western plane crash at Cranbrook, B.C.—coverage which combined the worst aspects of sensationalism, irresponsibility and inaccuracy. The problems in the initial reporting were compounded by the later announcement of the story on “Front Page Challenge” when it was categorically stated that the airplane crashed while trying to avoid a snow-plow which was on the runway. This statement was made well in advance of the completion of the inquiry by the Ministry of Transport.

I seek to move, seconded by the hon. member for Okanagan Boundary (Mr. Whittaker):

That this House admonish the CBC for reporting well below the standard expected of the Crown corporation and urge that it review its procedures in reporting disastrous accidents.

Mr. Speaker: Presentation of such a motion can be made at this time only by unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Yes.

Some hon. Members: No.

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CRIMINAL CODE

APPARENT DISCRIMINATION IN APPLICATION OF OFFENSIVE
WEAPONS PROVISIONS—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Gordon Towers (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, I rise under the provisions of Standing Order 43. My motion concerns the fact that when, in 1972, the police in the province of Quebec charged six Cubans with unlawful possession of machine-guns, the federal government intervened to get the charges dropped and then apologized to the Cubans involved. In view of the fact that under present gun control laws many Canadian citizens are subject to charges for merely possessing a firearm in contravention of the regulations—without, I might add, any chance of the same treatment accorded the Cubans—I ask leave to move, seconded by the hon. member for Perth-Wilmot (Mr. Jarvis):

That this House repudiate restrictions which infringe on the rights of Canadians at a time when the government apparently neglects the use of much more offensive weapons by foreigners resident in this country.

Mr. Speaker: Presentation of such a motion requires unanimous consent. Is there such consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

[Mr. Speaker.]

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

VALUE OF CANADIAN DOLLAR—PROSPECTUS TO BE FILED WITH
U.S. SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to take up with the Minister of Finance an answer he gave me yesterday when he said he did not expect the government would be giving the Securities and Exchange Commission of the United States any new information which was not already available to the Parliament of Canada.

My clear understanding is that the SEC requires that any government going to them, as the Government of Canada proposes to go to them, must give details of its budgetary and fiscal position for the current year. In other words, it would appear that the government of Canada would be required to disclose Canada's 1979 budgetary position. Will the minister tell us now whether the government, in filling out its prospectus to an agency of another country, will be setting out in detail such matters as estimated economic growth, any changes in fiscal policy which may have resulted from the first ministers' meeting, and the anticipated budgetary deficit?

● (1417)

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I verified this problem with my officials and they have assured me that there is no information that is required by the filing of that prospectus with the SEC that has not been made public already in Canada.

Mr. Clark: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister could address himself to the specific question I put to him, as to whether or not the government of Canada will be detailing the growth estimates for 1979, any changes in fiscal policy resulting from the agreements reached at the first ministers' meeting, and the anticipated government deficit. Will those matters be part of the prospectus given to the SEC?

Mr. Chrétien: I think the way I replied to the question covered all those points, Mr. Speaker. I said—and I repeat—that there is no information which will be given to this organization that is not public information. I verified this fact this morning with my deputy minister and other officials and they have assured me of that.

Mr. Clark: A final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. We will see, when the time comes, whether the minister is more forthcoming to an agency of a foreign government than he is to the House of Commons of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: But on the question of the minister's very unusual reluctance to bring in his first budget as Minister of Finance, given the fact that now, after the first ministers' meeting, the government of Saskatchewan and the government