

CANADIAN FILM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

INQUIRY AS TO ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. David MacDonald (Prince): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Secretary of State. Inasmuch as the house did not sit on Sunday I did not have the opportunity to wish the good lady a happy first anniversary of the giving of royal assent to the Canadian Film Development Corporation legislation. I wonder whether now, a year later, the government has appointed the officers of that corporation.

Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Secretary of State): Yes, Mr. Speaker, the government has, but the announcement has not yet been made.

FINANCE

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND—REQUEST FOR MORATORIUM ON FARM DEBTS

On the orders of the day:

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Queens): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture and ask whether negotiations are in progress between the government of Prince Edward Island and his department with a view to instituting a moratorium on debts payable by farmers in Prince Edward Island to the Farm Credit Corporation, due to the depressed economic situation of agriculture in that province.

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I know of no specific and current negotiations with the provincial government at this time on this question, but the Farm Credit Corporation, as I understand it, does have authority to postpone payments in a year when prices and returns to farmers are inadequate. I feel very certain that if things are of this critical nature they will give very serious consideration to such requests.

INDUSTRY

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE IN DEVELOPMENT OF ALBERTA TAR SANDS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, on Friday last the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and I had a tête-à-tête about the Athabasca tar sands, and the minister indicated he would give consideration to making a statement about this. I wonder whether he has come to a conclusion about it.

Income Tax Act

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, there is not enough material on which to make a statement. This is only an interesting project, and that seems to be all there is to say about it at this time.

INCOME TAX ACT

MEASURE TO PROVIDE FOR SURCHARGE

On the order:

Second reading of Bill C-207, an act to amend the Income Tax Act—the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I should like to make it clear that I do not wish to make life difficult for Your Honour; neither do I wish to bore the house with a procedural discussion.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Knowles: I thought that was a way in which I could get applause. Nevertheless it does seem to me that there is a point that should be decided by Your Honour, if not for the sake of the debate on which we are now about to launch, then it should be decided for the sake of the future. We have learned around here that precedents can sometimes get established very easily, and once we have them they become binding for a long time to come.

● (3:30 p.m.)

I would point out that there are quite a few citations in the authorities regarding the house being asked again in the same session to decide on something on which it has already made a decision. I will not take the time of the house to read all of these citations but I will quote a couple of them just to have them on the record in this context. Citation 200(1) at page 167 of Beauchesne's fourth edition reads as follows:

An old rule of parliament reads: "That a question being once made and carried in the affirmative or negative, cannot be questioned again but must stand as the judgment of the house." Unless such a rule were in existence, the time of the house might be used in the discussion of motions of the same nature and contradictory decisions would be sometimes arrived at in the course of the same session.

The other citation to which I would draw your attention is citation 163 at page 137 of Beauchesne's fourth edition, which reads as follows:

A mere alteration of the words of a question, without any substantial change in its object will not be sufficient to evade the rule that no question shall be offered which is substantially the same as