

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

Board and its work. I know the Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier) would appreciate the praise which the hon. member has heaped on the board, which is worthy of much admiration and support in this House. I am sure the hon. member wants to be fair to the minister in noting that he is not in the House at this moment. I think the hon. member will acknowledge that the Secretary of State has been in the House all day on another matter and that he was tied up all morning on government business. I hope the hon. member will not mind if I respond on the minister's behalf.

The films of the National Film Board have in fact become so popular, as the hon. member has indicated, that this in itself has created a problem. I suppose this is partly a problem of success and partly a problem arising from austerity. The fact is that the board advised the Secretary of State that the demand for its films has become so great, combined with restraints on its expenditures, that it has not been able to increase the staff in its regional offices and to produce the additional prints necessary to meet all the demands on its current budget.

● (10:20 p.m.)

The result is that persons using the board's services are being asked to share in the cost. The board, I understand, has decided it should introduce, effective January 1, 1970, a rental fee on all films borrowed from its libraries across Canada. The schedule of rates, I am informed, would be based on the length of the film. For a loan period of a day, that would vary between \$3 and \$12 which is not a large sum, as the hon. member has indicated. He has mentioned that it would amount to \$72,000 in Saskatchewan alone. I ask the hon. member if—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired.

LABOUR CONDITIONS—FAIREY AVIATION LAY-OFFS—INCOME MAINTENANCE BENEFITS

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, my purpose tonight was to attempt to obtain replies to several questions asked during the past week or ten days in the House in respect of the pending closure of the Fairey of Canada plant. Notwithstanding the fact that certain government members are attending the Christmas party, I am very disappointed that neither the Minister of

[Mr. Stanbury.]

Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand) or his parliamentary secretary could be here. I am a little doubtful whether I should proceed. I will proceed, however, and say that I think it is a pretty sad commentary on the plight of a very hard-pressed area to see the lack of interest tonight.

Before I refer to the four questions I have in mind, perhaps I might by way of preamble say that the Fairey Company, a 21-year establishment in the Atlantic region, is one of our larger industries. Perhaps it is more important to say it is one of our more critical industries. For some 20 years this plant employed on the average 1,000 to 1,200 men. With the sophistication of the aero space industry in Dartmouth, I think it can be said that the operation spread to include another 400 to 500 people in other firms in the immediate area. Now we have the very sad announcement by the officials of the company that the plant is to be closed on April 1, 1970.

I should like to quote from a telegram from the Premier of Nova Scotia to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) dated December 8:

The announced closing of Fairey Aviation in March, 1970, will have a serious effect to the economy of this area.

Fairey Aviation employs 404 people, a high proportion of whom are highly skilled technical and middle management personnel. If these people are lost to us through closure of this operation we will have lost the great contribution they can make to the kind of progress which can utilize their skills and training.

While Fairey Aviation is not a defence base the company informs us it is entirely dependent on defence expenditures for survival. The deescalation of these expenditures is responsible for the situation in which this establishment now finds itself. It is an adverse economic effect flowing from defence policy.

I refer to your letter of May 30, 1969, in which you make reference to the fact that the regional economic effects of any changes in defence expenditures should be taken into consideration and your assurance that your colleagues and yourself have this in mind.

The premier of Nova Scotia goes on to assure the Government of Canada of that province's support in any efforts that can be made to save this vital and viable industry. I should like to quote from another telegram. This is from the mayor of the city of Dartmouth. I shall quote it only in part, as follows:

The closure appears to be the direct result of federal government policy. If you have plans for the elimination of regional disparity their application should take place immediately.