

Development of Film Industry

time I would point out that if she speaks now she will close the debate.

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether it is the intention of the house to debate this bill now, or is it to be referred to one of our standing committees?

Miss LaMarsh: Mr. Speaker, at one time it was the intention to refer this bill to the broadcasting committee, but it was decided not to deal with it in the standing committee but in committee of the whole house.

Mr. MacDonald (Prince): Mr. Speaker, may I put a question to the minister? I should like to ask whether it is not true that she has received representations from the people most interested in this industry, the producers and others who have been interested for some time in this regard, and who wish to put forward some improvements in the legislation. There was some difficulty last year in contacting the minister. I think it would be most welcome if the committee could meet with the people specifically involved in this industry. I think many hon. members of the house do not understand the full intent of this measure. In order that we may fully understand the situation in this regard I think the minister should be willing to see these people.

Mr. Prittie: Mr. Speaker, if this matter had been raised in September or October last I would most readily have agreed; but if it is referred to the broadcasting committee, I do not know what will happen. I suggest that this matter will not be resolved by 1969 if it is referred to the committee. Some of the people who represent film making associations came to Ottawa last June and made representations in this respect. I made some notes at that time and I shall be dealing with these matters when we reach the clauses of the bill. I believe we could have dealt with this matter in October or November last, but I think we should now go ahead with it.

Mr. MacDonald (Prince): Mr. Speaker, there is a great deal of interest on the part of producers and others involved in this question and I think we should not deal with the question at this time. It would only involve a few weeks to call a couple of meetings of the committee to deal with this subject. If the committee were to study this question, I believe they could direct us as to the best way in which this legislation could be presented. If we do not do this, I believe we may seriously weaken the legislation that is before us today.

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Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, I have received absolutely no representations from any source asking for such a matter to be referred to committee. I have not received any such representations from anyone interested. Over the past six or eight months I have not seen anyone connected with the industry who has made representations in this regard; this includes people within and without the country. I know at the present time of no request by anybody to appear before the committee. This piece of legislation has been exposed since June 20 and has been subject to any publicity which might have appeared in the film magazines and film press in this connection. The representations I have received have been connected with such things as distribution and the necessity for producing something which meets certain criteria of Canadians. These have not been matters, I suggest, in which the federal or provincial governments will be affected.

This is not supposed to be a subsidy, as some hon. members have seemed to suggest. We are concerned here with a budget of \$2 million or \$10 million, but this does not mean that the Canadian government will be involved in the film business. This money is supposed to meet the needs that exist in regard to the producers producing films for world wide distribution. Some films have been produced by Canadian producers. They may apply to this corporation for "front" money or "end" money which is necessary to meet their budgets. Some others may be coming to us for interim money, or guaranteed money in the form of a bonding, as it were. This matter has been dealt with by Mr. Giroux. In other words, it is not a phraseology of the legislation at all. However, I have not any knowledge that there has been any attack on it; it is advice as to how the corporation might function.

The hon. member has suggested that the provinces might be involved in setting up the distribution in this regard. It is no use producing a film and keeping it in a can on some dusty shelf; the corporation should have a package deal in connection with the finished product. It should be placed on the basis of the distributor being able to make the most worth-while use of it under a budget that is realistic. After all, one of the aspects of this fund is a banking fund. I suggest to my colleague from Vancouver Quadra (Mr. Deachman) that it is quite different from the ordinary function of the Canada Council, which