

Oral Questions

tion, the closing can be postponed until some time later in January. I would be pleased to meet with a committee of this House, if it is so desired, to give the type of information which I am sure the Hon. Member would like to have.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Now what are you going to do?

Mr. Deans: Claim a victory. What do you think?

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, in light of that, I am really glad to see the Minister back. This change in the Government's attitude with respect to informing Parliament and the Canadian people about the deal is very welcome. I am glad that we will be given this opportunity.

REVIEW BY INVESTMENT CANADA

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I now wish to ask the Minister about the review by Investment Canada. He is bound to accept advice on the question from the Investment Canada agency which has been established by legislation introduced by the Government. Has he received the advice yet from Investment Canada? Will he inform Members of the House what that advice is when he does receive it?

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I have been in touch with officials of Investment Canada. I have to tell the Hon. Member that, to date, they have not been in a position to advise me on this deal. However, I can certainly assure the hon. gentleman that I do not see any particular reason Investment Canada would have to rule prior to the committee hearing to which I have referred. At that time, undoubtedly, there will be ample opportunity for people to make comments, if they see fit, with respect to this transaction.

REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE HEARINGS IN JANUARY

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address my question to the Deputy Prime Minister in the absence of the Prime Minister. We have made more progress in terms of parliamentary scrutiny on the de Havilland deal in the one-half hour since the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion has returned than in the 11 days we spent questioning the President of the Treasury Board.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: Let's hear it for Sinc!

Mr. Cassidy: Since the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion has indicated that we can have committee scrutiny of the de Havilland deal before it is concluded, will the Government now undertake to permit a committee, and give it a mandate, to look at the deal early in January, and possibly before the House returns, so that we will have scrutiny of the deal by Parliament before it is concluded?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the Minister has just responded to that question. I see no inconsistency with his willingness to inform a committee of the House and the statements which have been made by the President of the Treasury Board. He now tells us that the closing may well be delayed until the end of January. Assuming our return here on January 13, there is that period of time between January 13 and the end of January to hold committee hearings. I can see no reason why those cannot be arranged through the usual machinery of Parliament.

Mr. Frith: This is the Christmas spirit!

REQUEST FOR COMMITMENT TO COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, it looks as though the spirit of Christmas cheer may well be with us in the House. I thank the Deputy Prime Minister for his comments. However, I would now like to be a bit more specific.

The Deputy Prime Minister also indicates that he sees no reason why this cannot be arranged before the deal is concluded. Could we have a commitment given here in the House today that a committee of the House of Commons will, in fact, examine the Boeing purchase of de Havilland before the deal is made final? Will the Minister assure us that we will have an opportunity to question the various parties involved and look at the documents before the deal is made final?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, if that is the wish of the House, and if the Hon. Member would like me to sign today's "blues" for him, I would be happy to do that. In the meantime the usual process would be for the House Leaders to discuss those arrangements, as is customary in making arrangements for that type of committee sitting.

Mr. Deans: What do you think we have been doing for the last three days?

Mr. Broadbent: Why didn't you tell Ray about that today?

Mr. Nielsen: The Leader of the New Democratic Party asks me why I did not tell my House Leader. I am asking my House Leader now to get together with the other House Leaders, as he has been all along in this whole scenario, to make those appropriate arrangements.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!