

Since damages resulting from the recent landslides in the town of Asbestos, in Quebec, will amount to several million dollars, could the minister say if he has been consulted by the municipal authorities with a view to redeveloping that part of the town of Asbestos and assisting the victims?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I have received a telegram from the mayor of the town who has asked if he could see me regarding this matter.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Swift Current-Maple Creek. Order. Perhaps the hon. member would allow me to recognize the hon. member for Richmond for a supplementary, and I will come to him in a moment.

[Translation]

Mr. Beaudoin: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

Could the minister tell us whether the mayor has mentioned when he would like to meet him?

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): As soon as possible, Mr. Speaker.

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[English]

CORPORATE AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR CANCELLATION OF FINES FOR LATE FILING OF RETURNS BY SMALL BUSINESSES

Mr. Jack McIntosh (Swift Current-Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. Because small businesses in Canada are encountering difficulties in making collections, will the government cancel or declare a moratorium on monetary fines for late filing of government returns, as the penalties imposed are to a large degree a form of blackmail on the part of the government?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The first part of the question is in order, but I would think that the second part is more in the form of an argument. The hon. member may want to rephrase the question, but in any event the first part is quite in order and perhaps the minister might be allowed to reply.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I take it that this is in the form of a representation that we should forego monetary penalties. We do not have the subject under consideration at the present time.

Mr. McIntosh: Does the Acting Prime Minister not agree that many of the delays in filing have been brought about by circumstances of the government's own making such as its inability to sell western grain or to cope with the high rate of unemployment?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Inquiries of the Ministry

FINANCE

GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIONS TO WORLD BANK RESPECTING PEGGING OF INTERNATIONAL CURRENCIES

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Finance to advise the House whether the government of Canada has made direct or indirect representations to the governors of the World Bank with a view to changing the pegging system of international currencies either to a floating average or a wider band of spread in order to avoid some of the difficulties we have had in recent years?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, we have not made direct representations, but this matter has been under discussion, as my hon. friend knows, by the World Bank for some time. It was brought up at the last general meeting of the bank at which time the governors expressed their views, and it is under continuing study.

[Later:]

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Finance. Can he tell us whether it is his or the government's intention to press this point with the governors of the World Bank in order to assist Canada to return to a more flexible, fixed currency?

Mr. Benson: Mr. Speaker, I would simply say that the matter is certainly worthy of study and is indeed presently being studied, as my hon. friend knows. Canada will participate in such studies.

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IMMIGRATION

REFUSAL OF VISITORS' VISAS TO REPRESENTATIVES OF SOUTH VIET NAM PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. Does his decision to refuse visitors' visas to certain representatives of the provisional revolutionary government of South Viet Nam, who had been invited to speak in Windsor, represent a change in policy on the part of the government because, as he knows, his predecessor did allow such people to come to Canada?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): No, Mr. Speaker, this does not represent a change in policy. In applying this policy, of course, every specific fact and variation must be taken into consideration, especially in a case where special permits for people who may be otherwise prohibited are involved. In this particular case the meeting did not seem to be one essentially of a Canadian direction, and that certainly had some weight in the decision taken.