

Oral Questions

INDUSTRY

UNITED AIRCRAFT—PUBLICATION OF DOCUMENTS CONCERNING GRANTS—REQUEST FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO MOVE MOTION

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I rise to move a motion under the provisions of Standing Order 43. This motion arises out of the unanimous request made by the Manpower and Labour Committee of the Quebec National Assembly last week for the federal government to provide "details of agreements regarding grants given to United Aircraft of Canada Limited".

This request from the Quebec National Assembly arises from an inquiry being conducted by that body into recent activity by the United Aircraft Corporation in that province which has received over \$80 million in federal assistance and has nonetheless transferred 40 per cent of this year's planned production back to the United States and plans a further transfer of production next year. I therefore move, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles):

That, following the request by the Quebec National Assembly for the abovementioned information on agreements and the stated willingness of United Aircraft to provide this information, pending federal government approval, this House instructs the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce to comply with this request at the earliest possible time.

Mr. Speaker: The House has heard the motion which, being proposed pursuant to Standing Order 43, cannot be debated without the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: There not being unanimous consent, the motion cannot be debated at this time.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, my question was for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. I know he is in the lobby and I am wondering if he could be given the opportunity to take his seat, as I know he will want to answer my question.

An hon. Member: Why is he not here?

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INDUSTRY

UNITED AIRCRAFT—PUBLICATION OF DOCUMENTS CONCERNING GRANTS

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, may I direct my question to the Prime Minister. As the committee of the Quebec National Assembly

[Mr. McCleave.]

has made the unanimous request for the federal government to provide the details of its contractual arrangements with United Aircraft concerning grants made by the government and obligations undertaken by that company, will the Prime Minister inform the House if the government has reconsidered its decision about making such information public, given the fact that United Aircraft Corporation itself says it does not object to public revelation of this information.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, so far as the government is concerned, I shall want to look into the latter fact. If United Aircraft Company has no reservations, I shall ask the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce to report to me and give his views on whether this material is publishable. I perhaps disagree with the hon. member, or at least have some reservations about his suggestion that the federal government should be obliged to submit material in any form to the legislative assembly of a province. However, the substance of the matter remains the same. If it can be made public, it can be made public in this House and some other forum may find use for it.

Mr. Broadbent: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. To be clear, may I ask the Prime Minister if it is his view, and therefore that of the government, that, in the case of an agreement entered into on behalf of the public of Canada by the government of Canada on a confidential basis with a corporation, if the corporation does not object to that information being made public because it sees no competitive disadvantage to itself, that being the normal, quite understandable reason for failure to disclose certain information, the government will make this information available to the public. Will the Prime Minister give that assurance to the House?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, that is what I indicated I would be discussing with the minister. I think as a general principle, the point of view of the hon. member seems acceptable to me. Confidentiality is to protect the particular company. If they do not want it, we do not want it. However, there may be particular circumstances of which I am not aware. That is why I indicated to the member I would raise the matter with the minister and ask him to reply to the House.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

ARRANGEMENTS FOR USE OF BRONFMAN JET BY MINISTER OF NATIONAL HEALTH AND WELFARE FOR VISIT TO ISRAEL— PAYMENT FOR PASSAGE

Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. The Prime Minister suggested on Tuesday that the travel arrangements for the minister's visit to Israel were proposed by the inviting government. Will the minister tell the House if the proposal to fly on the Bronfman jet was included in the formal initial invitation of the government of Israel and is he satisfied that Mr. Bronfman or an official of his company did not first suggest that their corporate jet be used?