

Inquiries of the Ministry

in Canadian companies and largely by debt investment rather than a majority equity holding, and that this would continue to be favoured by the Canadian government.

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): In view of the minister's statement that the whole position with respect to the enrichment plant process is still somewhat up in the air, will he assure the House that before a final decision is made on the merits of Canadian financial control, the problem of pollution, and so on, the whole issue will be weighed against the relative merits of developing Minas Basin tidal power?

Mr. Greene: Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that before any final decisions are made and when there is something specific to announce, it will be done in this House in a proper manner. To date, there is only a possibility and the matter of informing the Japanese that we welcome their suggestions in this regard. At this stage it would not be proper to present anything to the House because there is nothing specific to present. When there is, hon. members may be assured that I will report it to the House.

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AIR CANADA**LAY-OFF OF OTTAWA RESERVATIONS PERSONNEL—
TRANSFER OF FACILITIES TO MONTREAL**

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Transport. If the minister has not already done so, will he investigate the lay-off of 50 reservations personnel in Ottawa by Air Canada to ensure that these people are offered alternative employment and are not simply part of a large-scale lay-off plan of Air Canada and Canadian National Railways across Canada? Also, will the minister ensure that the service to the public is not downgraded as a result, since it is most important that first-class service be available in Canada's capital?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will be glad to do what the hon. member suggests. I have some preliminary information I can give to the House. I have been advised by Air Canada that this consolidation of reservation services and the like is part of a program policy in effect in other parts of Canada. A minimum of 25 of those who will be affected will be offered alternative employment immediately in, I believe, the Montreal centre where this will be carried out. Since the whole scheme will not take effect until October of next year, it is anticipated that by that time some of the employees will have left through the normal attrition process. Other employees will be offered employment in other parts of the country. Their usual travelling and moving expenses will be covered.

Mr. Hees: Did the Prime Minister notice the first-class manner in which the minister answered the question and will he take that as an example for the future?

[Mr. Greene.]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I ask the well-answering minister whether he was consulted regarding this decision by Air Canada to transfer telephone reservation facilities from Ottawa to Montreal, whether those consultations were with regard to the whole plan of the airline, and whether the minister approves of that plan?

Mr. Jamieson: I think the hon. member knows as well as any hon. member in the House that in terms of this type of management I am not consulted. I have, of course, had conversations with the management of Air Canada with regard to their general management plans for the immediate future. It was in this context that the question of centralizing the reservation process was discussed. It is, in fact, becoming a common practice now not only in Canada but throughout the world.

Mr. Lewis: May I ask the minister to be good enough to look into this decision by Air Canada, since not only jobs are involved but also service to the public in the capital of the country, and undertake to make a statement to the House on motions when we reconvene in the new year informing hon. members why this decision has been made by the airline?

Mr. Jamieson: I am not certain that the residents of the capital city, important as it is, are any more important than the residents in any other part of the country—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Perhaps the minister would reply to the question as quickly as possible. Hon. members will notice that we have not been moving very rapidly this morning and there are only a few minutes left before the end of the question period. I hope there will not be too many supplementaries from now on.

Mr. Jamieson: I will answer briefly, Mr. Speaker. The whole objective is an improvement in efficiency; it is a matter of giving better service. But I shall be glad to consider the hon. member's suggestion and see what I can do.

Mr. Mac T. McCutcheon (Lambton-Kent): Bearing in mind that booking services will be centralized many miles away from flight origins, will there be an improvement in meteorological forecasting such as this proposal would necessitate?

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CANADIAN FILM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**APPOINTMENT OF IVAN RITMAN TO BOARD**

Mr. J. B. Morison (Halton-Wentworth): I have a question for the Acting Secretary of State. Would he be good enough to ask the minister whether he knew, when he appointed Ivan Ritman to the Canadian Film Development Board, that Mr. Ritman had been convicted last June of possessing, printing, making and publishing an obscene film?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!