

Auditor General

opinions of hon. members on the procedural aspect of the matter, whether we can at this point by discussing the matter further reflect in this way on a vote or whether it is required, the vote having been taken, that the President of the Treasury Board be given the unanimous consent of the House to withdraw the bill.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the President of the Privy Council might like to attempt to enlighten the Chair on this point.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, as I read the first adopted motion, the House gives consent to the President of the Treasury Board to withdraw the bill. Presumably there is then required an action on the part of the President of the Treasury Board, that of asking to withdraw the bill. In other words, the motion gives consent, but there is a requirement to be fulfilled on the part of the President of the Treasury Board in order to withdraw the bill. That is my view—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. MacEachen:—procedurally, and that is why I ask on behalf of the President of the Treasury Board—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. MacEachen:—for consent to withdraw the bill.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I doubt that it is necessary to hear further argument. I agree with the point of view of the President of the Privy Council. The motion is that this House gives consent to the President of the Treasury Board to withdraw. He has to be given an opportunity to withdraw, the House having given unanimous consent.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, on the point of order may I suggest that the House has given its consent to this *ex post facto* request.

An hon. Member: Right.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Woolliams: Apparently the minister does not know what he is doing.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I never expected such co-operation from the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. MacEachen: I gather now, Mr. Speaker, that from a procedural point of view I may ask on behalf of the President of the Treasury Board to withdraw the bill affecting the Auditor General of Canada which is on the order paper at present.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The point is quite clear. Has the President of the Privy Council leave to withdraw the said bill?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.
Order discharged and bill withdrawn.

[Mr. Speaker.]

CANADA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**PROVISION FOR ESTABLISHMENT, OBJECTS AND POWERS, BYLAWS, AND REPORT**

Mr. Max Saltzman (Waterloo) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-204, to establish a Canada Development Corporation.

Some hon. Members: Explain.

Mr. Saltzman: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill is to mobilize private and public funds and to channel them into investment serving the public interest of Canada as a whole, and to expand the public sector of the economy where necessary for the growth of the economy, for national planning and for increasing Canada's independence.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**NATIONAL SECURITY****NEGOTIATIONS FOR RELEASE OF JAMES CROSS BY KIDNAPPERS**

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Prime Minister whether he has any information to give the House about Mr. James Cross?

[Translation]

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Yes, Mr. Speaker. During the course of last night, police forces undertook an intensive search in order to locate Mr. Cross and his kidnapers as well as the killers of Mr. Laporte.

Following this action, the police received a note from the presumed kidnapers of Mr. Cross calling for discussions between a person designated by them and a representative of the governments. This morning, the representative of the federal and Quebec governments, Mr. Robert Demers, initiated such discussions.

The House will remember that several weeks ago the governments offered those holding Mr. Cross as a hostage a safe-conduct in exchange for his release. The offer still stands, and representatives of the Department of External Affairs are now in Montreal to make arrangements in connection with this safe-conduct, if necessary. The House will understand that, as discussions are now in progress, I cannot give more information at the present time.

However, Mr. Speaker, the Justice Minister (Mr. Turner) or myself will report to the House on any important new development.