

Inquiries of the Ministry

ering their payments under the Canada Assistance Plan whenever there is an increment in old age security as provided for by the act because, as a matter of fact, this does apply in the province of Alberta?

Mr. Munro: Under the Canada Assistance Plan the province determines when a person is in need. If the federal government should give an increment under some of its policies to people who were receiving payments from the province, the province could, in those circumstances, reduce the payments they had been making up to that time. We usually discourage it, but there is nothing to prevent the province from doing so.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): I have a further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The minister might then advise the House what is the benefit of the cost of living increase provided under the old age security program if a payment is provided on the one hand under the Old Age Security Act and then withdrawn by the province under the Canada Assistance Plan?

Mr. Munro: I would hope the provinces would not do that.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): But they do.

NATIONAL FILM BOARD**ABSORPTION BY INFORMATION CANADA—
FUTURE ROLE**

Mr. John Burton (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Secretary of State. In view of the continuing concern about the future of the National Film Board, can the minister assure the House that the National Film Board will not be absorbed in Information Canada? Also, will he undertake to make a statement as soon as possible to clarify the future role of the National Film Board?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Gérard Pelletier (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, it has never been considered, and it is not now, to merge the National Film Board into the agency to be established under the name of Information Canada. I am surprised that a member of the House who heard my recent statement should ask such a question, as not one sentence of that statement can be so interpreted.

[*English*]

Mr. Burton: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the incomplete nature [Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West).]

of the study that was made of the Film Board and in view of the uncovered areas in the minister's statement last week, has the minister given further consideration to the views of the National Film Board employees since that time? Is the minister giving consideration to maintaining the personnel strength of the production section at a greater level than he indicated in the House last week?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pelletier: Mr. Speaker, cuts in personnel because of the government's austerity policy were inevitable. I said so in my statement. Once more, I will express my surprise at such a question being asked by a member who heard the statement in which I specifically mentioned that a comprehensive policy applying to films was in course of preparation.

[*English*]

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

**REFERENCE OF SAUMIER REPORT TO
COMMITTEE**

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): I hope the minister will not be surprised at this question. Will he use his good offices to have the Saumier report referred to the Standing Committee on Broadcasting, Films and Assistance to the Arts so the question of the Film Board and some of the conflicting and contrasting views of the Saumier Report and the government film commissioner, Mr. McPherson, can be reviewed in terms of a cultural policy for Canada?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Gérard Pelletier (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, the policy concerning the National Film Board and all relevant budgetary considerations will be reviewed by the committee when it deals with the estimates of the National Film Board.

[*English*]

**RECONSIDERATION OF ORDER LEVYING
CHARGES FOR USE OF FILMS**

Mr. Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West): A supplementary question to the Secretary of State. Is the minister reconsidering the policy imposed on the National Film Board through the austerity program which necessitated the implementation of user charges for films supplied to various public, educational and church institutions throughout Canada?