

*Adjournment Debate*

book sales. Further they have asked for a meeting which has now taken place. As I said a few moments ago they shortened up the time but it certainly will not achieve the effect desired. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that for the past two years, as I said on the day I originally put the question, it is a sort of constant fobbing off of Canadian authors and publishers.

● (1807)

I would hope, that while the Secretary of State himself is not with us this evening, his parliamentary secretary will give us a much more clear cut answer in terms of action that will be taken to make an effective attack on this very serious problem. I believe both the authors and publishers when they state that we are involved in a crisis situation. What has developed very rapidly in the last two years, if it will last for another year or two means a considerable collapse and certainly a very great loss to Canada in both revenue as well as to the authors and publishers themselves, who will obviously resort to foreign publication. It will certainly be a greater hole in our own situation with respect to an effective Canadian industry in the publishing field.

**Mr. Robert Daudlin (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State):** Mr. Speaker, the problem of the importation and the sale of foreign editions of works by Canadian authors in Canada, for which there exists a Canadian edition, is a very serious question and one to which the minister attaches extreme importance. Above all, it is a question of principle: can we accept that a right, which has been clearly set out and recognized by parliament through the Copyright Act, rest ineffective and inoperative? The question has another side as well, one based on the realities, with strong implications for the freedom of our writers to pursue creative activity and further for the survival and development of the Canadian book publishing industry.

I can appreciate the hon. member wishing some clarity could be shed on the actions about to be, or indeed will be at some future date, taken by the government. I can only suggest to the hon. member that the meeting he suggests would be an alternative answer to the publishers and authors. And although he would seek the kind of formality of interdepartmental committees, those committees or a committee of that type has not been set up. However, it may be small solace to him to know that indeed there is actively being pursued at this time by the various ministries which he has recited, Revenue, Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Secretary of State that meetings are taking place between the officials and various ministries with a view to examining solutions, such as that put by the authors and publishers.

Might I point out to the hon. member, and for the record indicate, that when he was suggesting that the royal commission on book publishing had indicated the criticism, that in fact he did not quite complete the citation, and perhaps I could indicate that the citation should read:

The procedure under section 27 (of the Copyright Act) . . . has been applied in a way that makes it unworkable in practice, and we think that this should be revised and clarified.

[Mr. MacDonald (Egmont).]

These procedures were revised and clarified in 1975 and new discussions are now under way between authors and publishers on one hand and officials from National Revenue on the other, in order to eliminate the final obstacles for the most efficient implementation of "List C" of the tariff and customs law. I might indicate to the hon. member that in addition to the various solutions that might be sought and expected in this instance the one solution of examination mentioned by the hon. member, is being held at this very time as to whether or not action should be supported.

SOCIAL SERVICES—CONSULTATION WITH PROVINCES ON FUNDING—POSSIBILITY OF LEGISLATION THIS SESSION

**Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris):** Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday a series of questions was directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss Bégin) with respect to the long anticipated legislation on social services. The reply of the minister indicated that she was not really in touch with the recent developments. This is the reason, why, again this afternoon I have chosen to bring the subject to the attention of the House and to the hon. lady, and I suppose in this case it will be the parliamentary secretary.

● (1812)

I know the problem is the rotation of ministers, which is one of the regular features of the present government. Ministers are changed so rapidly and so frequently that it is hard to know who has the responsibility for what. Therefore I cannot really fault the hon. lady who has the portfolio at the present time for not being aware of the situation.

The dialogue in connection with the new social services legislation has been going on for some four years, ever since the last minister tabled the orange paper. The main problem, of course, in areas of joint jurisdiction and joint responsibility such as health and welfare, is getting a consensus from the provincial governments. This was achieved last June and the bill went on the order paper with the assurance that there would be debate on it at the earliest possible moment. Unfortunately, last September 16, just before parliament resumed, the former minister as one of his last acts issued a press release which said as follows:

Health and Welfare Minister Marc Lalonde today announced that he has proposed a major change in the federal financing of social services.

In letters sent yesterday to provincial welfare ministers and to territorial commissioners, Mr. Lalonde called for a switch to block financing from the current cost-sharing approach.

This simply means that the whole matter was scuttled because the consensus that had been so carefully achieved over a long period of negotiations went down the drain.

As anticipated, there was an immediate response from the provincial ministers who met a short time later in the city of Edmonton. A Canadian Press despatch at that time indicated the point of view of the provincial ministers. I quote:

Provincial social services ministers are united against a federal social services funding proposal after a two-day meeting.