

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, January 31, 1969

The house met at 11 a.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

BROADCASTING, FILMS AND ASSISTANCE TO THE ARTS

REFERENCE OF REPORTS OF FILM BOARD AND C.B.C. TO STANDING COMMITTEE

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, there have been certain discussions among representatives of the parties in respect of the work of the standing committee on Broadcasting, Films and Assistance to the arts. I think it is regarded as being desirable that the committee might have the opportunity to continue its studies before the estimates are brought down and, in particular, to travel to Montreal for the purpose of considering questions affecting the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and also the National Film Board.

Perhaps if the house is agreeable I could make the following motion:

That the report of the National Film Board of Canada for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1968, tabled on January 27, 1969, and the report of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1968, tabled on January 30, 1969, be referred to the standing committee on Broadcasting, Films and Assistance to the Arts, and that, for the purpose of its inquiry, the committee be empowered to adjourn from place to place within Canada and the clerk and the necessary supporting staff be authorized to accompany the committee.

Perhaps if the house is agreeable to giving leave in this regard we could make it an order.

Mr. McCleave: Mr. Speaker, it is acceptable. Motion agreed to.

• (11:10 a.m.)

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

STATEMENT RESPECTING EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN QUEBEC AND FRANCE

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have now had an opportunity to examine the letters

setting out the arrangements concluded between the governments of Quebec and France on the occasion of the visit of Quebec government representatives to Paris last week. These documents could not of themselves constitute international agreements, and in this connection I have since noted the statements of representatives of the Quebec government that the documents were not intended by Quebec to constitute intergovernmental agreements. We shall be reiterating our position to the French authorities.

[Translation]

The Canadian government understands the desire of the government of Quebec to strengthen its ties through cultural, educational and scientific exchanges with France as contemplated by the 1965 cultural agreement between Canada and France. This is a desire which the Canadian government fully shares and in the fulfilment of which it is more than willing to co-operate.

[English]

Two of the exchanges contemplate activities extending beyond the framework of the cultural agreement, notably in the fields of foreign investments and international telecommunications by satellite. Certain of the programs envisaged by these arrangements will require consultation with and the co-operation of the Canadian government. These matters should have been the subject of prior consultation with the Canadian government. We intend to pursue this point with the French authorities.

With regard to French investments, the Canadian government naturally welcomes the prospect of further increases in foreign investments in Quebec as in other parts of Canada within the framework of government policy on this question. Such investments could provide a significant contribution to the development of our expanding economy. I would not have thought, however, that arrangements of this kind would require to be embodied in an exchange of letters, as evidenced by what happened in the United Kingdom during the same trip. I assume that the two governments simply wished to underline the importance which they attach to co-operation in this area.