

Foreign Investment Review Agency

Paper unanswered. And I am repeating, I suppose, some of the complaints of the Opposition, almost on a daily basis now, concerning questions. But may I emphasize that whenever I rise at this time on Thursday afternoon, it is to seek information, and as such I do not believe that it is putting too much pressure on the Government. Thus it is disappointing to me sometimes that we do not get a more positive reaction.

As I look over some of the subjects we have had an opportunity to discuss in this period, I find that the range of subjects has been quite considerable and, of course, I am referring only to my own motions. I will let others speak about their own motions, but just on motions for the production of papers I note, for example, we discussed at some length the Department of Public Works and its restructuring. That is something which has been discussed, to my knowledge, for the last 15 years or so and many of us feel that it is time to come to some conclusion on that particular issue.

We discussed the Automotive Agreement in a motion for production of papers. We were looking for information for the parts dealers. They were complaining they did not have ready access to information which should be in the public domain. We sought papers in connection with trade, tourism and cultural exchanges between Canada and the Caribbean area. On my part, because of my interest in trade with the Caribbean area, I felt we should have a lot more information on what we were doing, the moneys we were spending, and the efforts we were making to encourage trade and tourism in that area. On another occasion we discussed construction and health standards for day-care centres, particularly as applied to provincial responsibilities. Once again, we were seeking information from the Government on what they considered to be their federal involvement, their federal responsibility.

An Hon. Member: Is that the Confederation Building?

Mr. Herbert: No. I will come to the Confederation Building a little later. On another occasion, Mr. Speaker, we discussed the Canada Assistance Plan at some length. We were looking for the standards for the programs and the conditions for federal participation in a revised Canada Assistance Plan. On yet another occasion, one of my motions dealt with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, residential mortgages and home foreclosures, a subject of common interest, and again we were seeking information.

We discussed day-care centres in the Public Service—and we can now bring in the Confederation Building day-care centre, if you wish. We mentioned it on this particular occasion. But here we were looking for information on Treasury Board involvement, the number of day-care centres which were being proposed and the kind of money which was likely to be spent. There was no question we were opposing the principle; we were just looking for information on how far the Government intended to go and what kinds of moneys they were likely to spend.

We discussed on one Thursday afternoon the popular subject in Quebec of the Dorval and Mirabel Airports. I do suggest here that although some of the information we were

seeking might not have been forthcoming, that particular discussion had some bearing on the eventual decision not to destroy Dorval Airport which, Mr. Speaker, is of particular interest to you in your constituency. As a result of this, I felt there was some success achieved on that occasion.

• (1710)

Another one of particular interest in my own riding which we discussed one Thursday afternoon is that of generic drugs. This is of particular interest today in light of the fact that Ayerst is leaving Quebec, going south of the border. We know that Hoffmann-La Roche is closing its doors in Quebec and giving up its pharmaceutical operation. Therefore, the subject of generic drug production is very much an issue today, and once again we ask the Government for information in order to be better aware of the Government's position and also to have more information for our own use.

Going back to the Canada Assistance Plan, on another occasion we discussed the benefits to the Province of Quebec where, as everyone knows, the federal Government pays 50 per cent of the benefits paid under that Plan.

On another occasion we discussed post office regulations and delivery to residences. We know that the post office is always a topical subject for discussion.

Another occasion on which we discussed the Canada Assistance Plan in a motion for the production of papers dealt with New Brunswick. We used that Province as an example of one of the less wealthy Provinces where there is difficulty in providing even the 50 per cent of the costs of this Plan. It was on that occasion that I continued my representation that we think sincerely about dividing that Plan that is two-thirds social assistance portion and one-third social service portion, and give greater emphasis to social assistance since the federal Government has a considerable impact on the cost of social assistance.

Another topical subject for discussion was the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation where we were requesting information because we were dissatisfied with what we were getting from the CBC. This was brought to the fore recently by a little anger which I expressed over the fact that the President of the CBC would come before the Committee asking for an additional \$7 million in Supplementary Estimates and presented neither a written nor a verbal explanation to the Committee as to why he needed the additional money. I will use this particular moment to express my disappointment at the attitude of the Crown corporations referred to in the Auditor General's report towards providing information willingly to Members of Parliament. It is my belief that we should not have to ask; the information should be provided.

I was looking at the Supplementary Estimates to which I just referred, and if one looks at the page under "Privy Council" we see four items; and if you read the details given under "Explanation of Requirements", one can judge that the Members are getting something of a con job. I do not mind if that is all that is left in the Supplementary Estimates, but I