

Inquiries of the Ministry

[Translation]

AIR CANADA

INQUIRY RESPECTING LOAN OBTAINED IN GREAT BRITAIN

Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the hon. Minister of Transport.

Yesterday the minister said that Air Canada had borrowed some 30 and a half million dollars in Great Britain in exchange for Rolls Royce engines. Did the minister try to get back from Britain before the apparently imminent collapse of the Commonwealth 30 and a half million dollars as part repayment of the amount of more than two billion dollars it owes us since the second World War?

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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FINANCE

REPRESENTATIONS FROM OTTAWA—CARLETON REGIONAL GOVERNMENT RESPECTING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Could the minister tell us if the government, either through him or through the Minister without Portfolio responsible for the National Capital Commission, has received from the government of Ontario, directly or indirectly, representations from the Ottawa-Carleton regional government concerning an upward revision of municipal grants so as to assist in the very serious financial problem that the greater municipality of Ottawa-Carleton is facing?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, no such representations have come to my attention.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Would the minister say whether the government would be prepared to listen to representations in this regard, since the matter concerns the whole of the national capital area?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member will appreciate that the question to some extent is hypothetical in view of the minister's reply.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

MEASURES TO RESTRICT ACQUISITION OF WEAPONS BY CRIMINALS

Mr. P. V. Noble (Grey-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, I should like to have directed my question to the Minister of Justice but, in his absence I shall direct it to the Acting Prime Minister. In view of the fact that our laws to control possession of handguns and concealed weapons have not prevented criminals and so-called urban guerrillas from acquiring whole arsenals of deadly weapons, is the government giving consideration to taking further

[Mr. McKinley.]

restrictive measures to curb the proliferation of weaponry which is seriously threatening our society?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, answering on behalf of the Minister of Justice, I will take the question as notice.

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WATER RESOURCES

INQUIRY AS TO INCREASE IN RIVER PROTECTION PERSONNEL

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry. In view of the widespread concern about the conservation and protection of our environment and our resources, can the minister say whether he plans to increase the number of personnel in our river protection services following the drastic reduction of last year?

Mr. Speaker: I would think this question should be placed on the Order Paper, but I may be wrong; perhaps there is an urgency which is not readily apparent. If there is urgency the hon. member might wish to raise the question at the time of the adjournment and have an opportunity to make a longer statement then.

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FINANCE

MERCANTILE BANK—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON NEW ARRANGEMENT RESPECTING CANADIAN OWNERSHIP AND INCREASE IN CAPITALIZATION

Mr. David Lewis (York South): May I direct a question to the Minister of Finance which in his absence last Monday I asked of the Acting Prime Minister. Would the minister undertake to make a statement on motions to inform the House more fully—I realize a press release has been issued—concerning the new arrangements which he and the government have made with the Mercantile Bank regarding a fourfold increase in its capitalization and consequently a fourfold increase in the business it may carry on, and requiring that the holdings by the First Citibank of New York—

Mr. Speaker: Order. It seems to me the hon. member is making a statement himself. It is my understanding he asked the minister to indicate whether a statement would be made by him. Perhaps the form of the question is a little lengthy.

Mr. Lewis: I am sorry it is a little lengthy. I wanted to make sure the minister would deal with all the matters involved in the question.

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): The press release which was tabled in the House explains the situation. It is simply a situation in which the Mercantile Bank is applying for an increase in capital as it is entitled to do under the Bank Act. We, as a government, have indicated we shall not authorize an increase in capital unless they move to a large degree of Canadian ownership and guarantee that this will happen.