

Adjournment Debate

film was not produced by the CFDC, but by the CBC. Is it true that Mr. McCabe was part of the production crew which went to the Republic of China? Was he granted a leave of absence? Was he on full salary while he was in China? For all of Mr. McCabe's frenetic activity it seems to me that he was handsomely paid, both by way of salary and by way of the fringe benefits he seemed to accumulate while he was executive director of that corporation. The minister seems to say in his answer that he does not know anything about the terms of separation between Mr. McCabe and the corporation. If the minister is going to discharge his responsibility totally, he ought to know what those terms were. The taxpayers of Canada, who have invested millions of dollars in the CFDC, have a right to know how that board of directors is managing the affairs of that corporation.

● (2215)

If they are going to discharge their stewardship properly, they owe an accounting to the Canadian people as to how their executive director discharged his duties. How much did it cost the taxpayers in addition to the very generous salary they were paying him? Does the Secretary of State (Mr. Fox) hold the board of directors accountable for the way they managed the affairs of that corporation? Can the parliamentary secretary stand in his place tonight and tell us whether Mr. McCabe was paid a year's severance pay, whether the board of directors asked for an accounting of Mr. McCabe's time in California and whether he went to the Republic of China to help film that movie, even though it was not part of the CFDC production schedule? If the taxpayers are to be given an account of the stewardship of that corporation, the parliamentary secretary should speak on behalf of the Secretary of State tonight.

Mr. Peter Stollery (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State and Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I intend to stick to the question the hon. member asked May 21 last and not involve myself in the rather extravagant elaboration of the question to which he has treated us.

Last May 21 the hon. member specifically asked that the Canadian Film Development Corporation disclose what is essentially confidential information concerning aspects of the corporation's internal administration as well as its relationship with its clients. The member opposite has consistently chosen to ignore one very crucial fact concerning this issue. It is that the Minister of Communications (Mr. Fox), who is responsible for the CFDC, operates at a traditional arm's length relationship with what is a Crown corporation and does not attempt in any way to interfere with its day to day internal operations. I am sure the hon. member would be the first to protest if he did.

In response to the questions raised by the hon. member, the minister has acted in a responsible manner by requesting a full report from the CFDC. This report has not, as yet, been forwarded to the minister for his full appraisal of all the facts surrounding the resignation of Mr. Michael McCabe as executive director of the corporation.

The minister will be asking again, this week, for presentation of the CFDC report at the earliest possible date. Once the minister has had an opportunity to study its contents thoroughly, he will be in a better position to respond to the questions raised by the hon. member, namely, the resignation of Mr. Michael McCabe.

CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION—RENT
INCREASES FOR APARTMENTS IN TORONTO

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Cosgrove) for being here this evening. I rise in connection with a question directed to him on May 23 of this year with respect to the Toronto Main Square apartment buildings. Those buildings are held by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation for which the minister is responsible. The purpose of my question was to determine why the tenants in those buildings were being notified that rents would be increased by 12 per cent on lease renewal, and that the first and last month's rent would also have to be paid at that time.

● (2220)

Since then I have written a number of letters to the minister on this matter. At no time has the minister given a satisfactory response to the fact that the tenants in those apartments are being asked to pay an increase in rents that is double the increase permitted by most landlords under Ontario laws. The minister made a further response on May 26, 1980, and told the House that CMHC had introduced a rent-gear-to-income program at Main Square. Six months later, I am advised that even though a number of tenants have applied for this relief, not one has received it. The tenants in those apartments want to know just who is giving the correct answer to this question.

Whatever the real answer is, the effect of this rental increase is, and will be, very real for Main Square tenants. At the time Main Square was constructed in 1971 it was reported that 65 per cent of the apartment units would be subsidized and that those who qualified for reduced rents would be senior citizens, handicapped persons, single parent families, students and low-income families.

The executive of the Main Square Tenants Association have repeatedly requested that they be supplied with information on the current population of those buildings, and to date have not been successful in receiving that information. However, in a letter dated July 23, 1980, to Toronto City Council the minister said that as of March, 1980, there were 22 handicapped and 252 senior citizens in Main Square.

In another letter dated September 10, 1980, to the Leader of the Ontario New Democratic Party the minister said:

Initially, there were 50 units available for such tenants, but only 22 units are currently occupied by handicapped or disabled persons. The reason for this was that CMHC was not able to rent them to handicapped people at the time the units became available and they were therefore rented to other tenants.

However, I can assure you, as these units become available, every effort is made to lease them to handicapped or disabled tenants.