

EXPO '67

INQUIRY AS TO SALE OF EXPO EXPRESS

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

Could he advise the house of the results of the talks he had yesterday or the day before with hon. Beaudry, Quebec Minister of Industry and Commerce, concerning the sale of Expo Express, and how the legitimate interests of the city of Edmonton in that connection are to be protected?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): I answered that question yesterday, at least in part, Mr. Speaker.

As far as we are concerned, we respect the legal procedures already undertaken. The SUTRI company was considered the highest tenderer, the Canadian Corporation for the 1967 World Exhibition collected the deposit made by that company, and normal procedures are now under way.

However, outside of that, I said yesterday that there was a possibility of reconciling all the parties concerned. Obviously, if all the parties are reconciled, and more particularly those of the city of Edmonton, it might then be possible to come to an agreement allowing SUTRI to desist from its present legal obligation.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

What is the attitude of the Canadian government and the management of the corporation with regard to the proposal made by the city of Montreal to reverse the decision to sell Expo Express by public tender or, at least, to invoke the principle of annulment?

Mr. Pepin: Mr. Speaker, what I have just said implies that we do not agree with that attitude.

[English]

FINANCE

INQUIRY AS TO INVESTIGATION INTO BIENVENU INTERESTS

On the orders of the day:

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question has to do with a report to the effect that certain elements of the Bienvenu empire have collapsed and the relationship with British International Finance (Canada) Limited to which the government granted a licence to

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operate the Bank of Western Canada. Is the minister undertaking an inquiry into the whole matter in the interest of according a high degree of protection and security to Canadian investors?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, we have been looking into this situation to determine the effect this might have on corporations which have insurance under our deposit insurance provisions, set up by the previous government a year or a year and a half ago. I will make a report to the hon. member shortly, but after a cursory examination I do not think there is any danger to depositors covered by our deposit insurance. I should like to make absolutely sure and then answer the hon. member.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Thank you very much. In view of the tangled web of financial manipulation which was apparent at the time of granting the charter to the Bank of Western Canada, what is the present position of that charter, particularly having regard to what has happened to these financial corporations connected with the Bienvenu interests?

Mr. Benson: I believe that the position of the Bank of Western Canada is, as my hon. friend knows, that it is being wound up. Its charter will lapse unless action is taken by the government to reinstate the charter. Otherwise the charter will just not be in use.

TELEVISION

REQUEST FOR STATEMENT RESPECTING STATION CKVR

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, in view of the absence of the Minister of Transport, with whom it might be of interest to have an eyeball to eyeball confrontation this morning, perhaps I might ask the Prime Minister to inquire of the Minister of Transport whether he will make a statement at an early date in connection with allegations regarding television station CKVR in Barrie?

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I thought the right hon. gentleman was about to give the house some indication of the situation and thereby let the public know what is happening.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I was only going to ask the Minister without Portfolio to bring this question to the attention of the minister.