

Committee Reports

append a statement to the report which has just been tabled we will be issuing one later today.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS—FOURTEENTH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Miss Aideen Nicholson (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the fourteenth report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. Pursuant to Standing Order 99(2) the committee requests that the Government provide a comprehensive response.

The committee is of the opinion that the Department of Finance was negligent in its management of the SRTC program. The program never performed as intended and emerged as a costly tax loop-hole. At last count the Crown faces uncollectable taxes in excess of \$900 million.

The consultation process was neither well planned nor comprehensive and resulted in an unanticipated demand for SRTCs. The quick flip procedure and inadequate definition of and control over qualifying research activity encouraged abuse, reduced the funds available for genuine research and created bad debts to the Crown.

The committee believes that certain important danger signals were in evidence very early and that the Department of Finance failed to establish from the outset an evaluation framework to be aware of and to respond to problems as they developed.

It is the view of the committee that Parliament must be informed of changes in the interpretation of tax expenditure legislation and the estimated costs of every major tax expenditure program.

FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS—FIFTH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table in both official languages the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

The report is an addendum to the committee's report of November 6 last dealing with financial institutions generally. The committee confirms the terms of that report, but adds amendments to recommendations in the report to deal with the situation in which non-financial companies gain control of financial companies. It is the committee's view that this type of activity is wrong, that it seriously impairs the security of depositors and that it is an unfair abuse of the financial system. The committee believes that ownership beyond 30 per cent by a non-financial company of a financial company should be barred.

SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY—FIRST REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Bill Tupper (Nepean—Carleton): Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Standing Committee on Science, Research and Technology I have the privilege of presenting the committee's first report in both official languages.

In accordance with the committee's mandate under Standing Order 96, the committee has heard evidence from industries concerned in relation to the process used by Revenue Canada to define scientific research and development for tax purposes. Your committee has considered the effects of the guidelines on industry and on research and technology policy in Canada. As a result, your committee therefore recommends that Revenue Canada release the draft guidelines for scientific research and experimental development to allow industry to have a 60-day consultation period before the guidelines are finally determined.

● (1110)

STRIKING COMMITTEE—FORTY-FIRST REPORT

Mr. Scott Fennell (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the Forty-first Report of the Striking Committee.

[Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.]

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise a point of order with you today. I have sought the advice of the Chair and the Table on this point and I would like to make sure I understand what is at hand.

This morning, we heard some reports being tabled and a request was made of the Government to respond to the reports under Standing Order 99(2). Within 120 days of tabling a report, the Government should give a comprehensive response to it.

What happens to those requests if prorogation of the House were to happen in September, for example? Is it an Order of the House and is it therefore within the rights of committee members to expect the Government to follow through with a response within 120 days as agreed or, on the other hand, does the prorogation of the House interrupt Standing Order 99(2) so that the requests would cease with the prorogation of the House?

I wonder if you would address that question, Mr. Speaker, because of its importance to many of us. There are a half a dozen reports now requiring a comprehensive response and I would like to know what the ruling would be.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the Hon. Member for his intervention. The only answer I can give him at the moment is that I must reserve. I simply do not know the answer to that question. I would be happy to reserve on it and return to the House with an answer.