

We certainly want to provide those who are leaving every opportunity to adjust back into the community. There will be early retirement provisions and early departure incentives that involve training and counselling. A wide range of services will be available to them which will help in terms of the adjustment.

They have been hard, dedicated workers for the people of this country. We want to make sure that we treat them fairly and reasonably.

[Translation]

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PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I wish to draw the attention of members to the presence in our gallery of His Excellency Willy Claes, Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

[English]

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POINTS OF ORDER

COMMENTS DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to a question from the hon. member for Prince George—Bulkley Valley, I believe I said he had 23 First Nations and he has 11. Once again, it is the other critic, the hon. member for Skeena, who has 23.

The Speaker: The clarification is noted.

I have a point of privilege from the hon. member for Sherbrooke. Might I ask the hon. member if this point of privilege arises out of this question period?

Mr. Charest: No, Mr. Speaker, it does not arise out of question period.

The Speaker: Pursuant to the rules of the House, the hon. member would know, being a respected parliamentarian, that the Chair should have at least one hour's written notice. I am sure the hon. member will want to proceed according to the rules and do just that. His question of privilege will be heard at the earliest possible time.

Mr. Charest: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I thank the Chair for its patience and for the clarification on the question of privilege.

This question of privilege arises out of an article published today in a paper which is well known on the Hill, the *Hill Times*. I wanted to advise the House immediately.

Point of Order

The Speaker will know, as all members of the House know, that a member also has the duty to inform the House and his fellow colleagues as soon as he or she is aware of the question of privilege, which I chose to do today. It relates to the secrecy of the budget process.

The Speaker: The hon. member is absolutely correct that there should be notification given to the Chair as soon as possible. As such, I know the hon. member will want to follow the rules and take the time to put his point of privilege, in all its fullness, at the earliest possible time. However, because it did not arise from question period today, I would rule that the point of privilege will be put off until later.

I thought the hon. member was going to introduce a point of order or did I misunderstand?

Mr. Charest: Mr. Speaker, for the record and to accommodate the rules and all members of the House in fairness, may I suggest that I raise this point of privilege tomorrow after question period so that all members of the House will know that this issue will be raised?

The Speaker: The hon. member would know that in accordance with the rules the answer would be yes.

[Translation]

The Speaker: My colleagues, we will now proceed to Thursday's usual question.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this is a difficult question to ask but I will ask my colleague, the Secretary of State for Parliamentary Affairs, to tell us about the business planned not only for the coming days but also for the week following the recess.

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, if I may, I will answer the question.

[English]

Today we will continue with second reading of the borrowing bill. When we adjourn tomorrow, we will stand adjourned until Monday, March 13. On that day we will consider the firearms bill. On Tuesday, March 14 and Wednesday, March 15 we will conclude the budget debate.

● (1505)

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, we intend to designate March 16 and 17 as opposition days.