

Hon. C. M. Drury (Minister of Public Works): No, Mr. Speaker, I have not run such a check.

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PUBLIC BUILDINGS

BOURDIGNON BUILDING, VANCOUVER—REQUEST FOR REPORT OF INVESTIGATION OF ADVERTISEMENT FOR LEASE

Mr. Bill Clarke (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Public Works. In reply to a question addressed to him several weeks ago he undertook to look into the matter of the calling for tenders for space in Vancouver for the offices of the National Revenue Department, taxation division. I should like to ask the minister what action has been taken as a result of the investigation, since there seems to have been no result at the Vancouver end.

Hon. C. M. Drury (Minister of Public Works): I regret to say I do not have the notes with me today, but I will be glad to bring them tomorrow. I thought the subject had been abandoned.

Mr. Clarke (Vancouver Quadra): No.

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CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

NUMBER OF REPORTERS ASSIGNED TO PRIME MINISTER'S TRIP TO COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE—SUGGESTED REDUCTION

Mr. Tom Cossitt (Leeds): Mr. Speaker, my question was intended for the Prime Minister or the Secretary of State but in the absence of those two members, may I direct it to the Acting Prime Minister? It being now some time since the fact was first mentioned in the House that as many as 22 CBC personnel were asked to cover the Prime Minister's forthcoming journey to the Caribbean, which exceeds coverage by the other sections of the news media by 500 or 600 per cent, can the Acting Prime Minister tell the House whether steps have been taken to curtail this large expenditure of public funds to a level in keeping with the already established news value of the Prime Minister's trips.

Mr. Hees: One man!

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): The CBC makes its decisions in accordance with what it considers newsworthy. A trip by the Prime Minister of Canada to a British Commonwealth meeting in the Caribbean is considered big news in some parts of this country even if it isn't big news to the hon. member.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cossitt: One further question to the Acting Prime Minister on the same subject. Is the government attempting to use the publicly-owned CBC as a means of propping up its own and the Prime Minister's sagging image?

Speaker's Ruling—Bill C-44

Mr. Sharp: Since the premise to the question is false, it of course requires no answer from anybody on this side of the House. But I suggest the hon. member should not ask so many silly questions.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cossitt: A question of privilege, Mr. Speaker!

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF COMMONS ACT, THE SALARIES ACT AND THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES ACT

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES—SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: Yesterday, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) raised a point of order in connection with Bill C-44. The importance of the point of order was amply demonstrated by the rather full discussion which took place in the House and in addition, I hope, by my efforts to come to a decision by eight o'clock. That was not possible, but as a result of further study and examination of the question I am now able to inform the House of my decision on the matter.

The procedural questions in connection with some of the amendments made to the bill in the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates are important inasmuch as they involve two or three fundamental principles of our procedure, not least of which, of course, is the question of the financial initiative of the Crown. Another question involves the relationship between proceedings in a standing committee and the Chair, and the third involves the relationship between the committee and report stages of legislation.

● (1500)

Dealing with the first point, namely, the financial initiative of the Crown, it is obviously one of our most basic and fundamental procedural principles that only a minister of the Crown may originate legislation which proposes a charge upon the revenue, and then only when last legislation is accompanied by a recommendation from the Governor General. No amendment can exceed the terms of that recommendation, no matter by whom it is moved, and no action taken by the House, by any member of the House, by any standing committee, and least of all by the Chair, must in any way weaken that very basic and fundamental principle of our practice.

The foundation for the point of order raised by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre is that subclause (2) of clause 2 of Bill C-44, which was adopted in the standing committee, firstly establishes commissioners who will review future salary changes, secondly advances the implementation of the indexing process from the date originally contemplated, and thirdly expands the concept involved in the indexing itself, none of which was contem-