

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Speaker, this bill attempts to require that all federal government statutes, statutory instruments and regulations be written in plain language and the object is quite simple. Canadians should be able to clearly understand the full intent of government action—dare I say it—without the help of a dozen lawyers. I do not want to be mean to our common profession, Mr. Speaker, but I want to cite what Napoleon once said. He said that constitutions and the laws of France should be drafted so that every peasant in every village in France should be able to read the document and understand what it meant.

That is what I attempt to do in this bill with respect to Canadian laws so that they will be clear, simple and straightforward and all Canadians, not just lawyers, will understand them.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member will remember what Shakespeare said about lawyers: "The first thing we will do, we will hang all the lawyers".

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

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POSTAL SERVICES REVIEW ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-321, an act to provide for the review of postal rates and services and to amend certain acts in consequence thereof.

Mr. Speaker: Shall the hon. member have leave to introduce the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the bill is to ensure that the public has an opportunity to play a role in the establishment of postal rates and the provision of postal services in Canada. It would also establish a postal services review board similar to the one that was cancelled by the Minister of Finance in the last budget.

This bill would ensure that Canada Post no longer has the right to shut down post offices in the indiscriminate manner that it is doing at the present time.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

ELECTIONS, PRIVILEGES, PROCEDURE AND PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

CONCURRENCE IN NINTH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands) moved that the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Elections, Privileges, Procedure and Private Members' Business presented to the House on Friday, December 29, 1989, be concurred in.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to rise to debate the adoption of the ninth report of the present Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections which formerly had a longer name. This committee laboured extensively last autumn to prepare a report on televising of the House. Committee members made a trip to Washington last summer and reviewed the television arrangements which were in place for the United States Congress. It met with various media representatives in Canada. It met with members of Parliament and conducted fairly extensive hearings on this issue before submitting this ninth report.

Since the report was tabled last December, very little progress has been made in dealing with the recommendations and they appear to have fallen on deaf ears insofar as the House is concerned. I wanted to take this opportunity today to move concurrence in this report so that we could draw the attention of members to the committee's recommendations with a view to having them adopted in this House.

The first recommendation dealt with the control of the Canadian parliamentary channel. It recommended that a consortium composed of representatives of the cable television industry and the CBC, a partnership in fact between the two, should be formed and authorized to take over the operation of the channel in so far as broadcast of non-House of Commons proceedings is concerned. That particular recommendation has been adopted in this House already. It is now before the CRTC where hearings will be held and the CRTC may or may not grant a licence to the partnership.

It is clear that that recommendation is on its way and there is really not a particular concern for this House arising out of it except for the monitoring committee. It has been recommended by the privileges and elections committee that that committee be appointed as the