

the committee. I wonder whether members of the press now have more privileges than members of this House. That is my question.

[*English*]

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raises a concern that has some interest and some legitimacy.

May I suggest that he raise it with the co-chairs of the committee and see if they cannot do something to accommodate him.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, I believe that in the weeks to come our country will be entering a very important phase, and the point raised by the hon. member is certainly a valid one.

I think the parliamentary secretary just made a very intelligent suggestion. First, to submit to the joint chairmen what the hon. member just said, bearing in mind that the Chair said it has no responsibility in that respect. Certainly the fact that two or three of us are rising in the House shows how important it is to proceed in an orderly fashion.

To me it seems incredible that some people should get this information in advance, if we agree that Parliament is supreme and all parliamentarians, irrespective of the opinions of the various political parties, are equal. As far as I am concerned, I would appreciate it very much if what we are saying now were carefully considered by the government, by the chairmen, the joint chairmen. I hope the hon. member's suggestion will meet with the approval of those who are listening or who should be listening to us at this time.

• (1530)

I agree it is not up to the Chair to dictate certain guidelines in this respect, but I wish to thank you for allowing us to add our own comments and letting us go on at some length so that the message will be heard.

Routine Proceedings

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to several petitions.

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

* * *

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

**ASIA PACIFIC PARLIAMENTARIANS FORUM FOR
EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC
CO-OPERATION**

Mr. Robert Wenman (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34, I have the honour to present to the House the report on the Asia Pacific Parliamentarians Forum for Educational, Cultural and Economic Co-Operation held in Canberra, Australia, on December 10 and December 11, 1991.

This is a very important conference that is attempting to keep the wider Pacific basin an open option in keeping with APEC and PECC work over the past years. This is an attempt to unite the parliaments of the Pacific with common understandings, particularly as they relate to the tremendous opportunities for growth of trade.

The United States, our major trading partner, is losing precedence to our Asian partners: Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan. The entire region is a region that is of extremely increasing importance to the Parliament of Canada. Therefore, this interparliamentary organization needs to find new precedence among our parliamentary organizations.

Along with the member for Saint-Denis, having observed this first hand, we feel very strongly that his report, which will follow, and this report must be taken very seriously.

Canada must join this organization and be an active part or we will be excluded as we have been excluded from the European Economic Community.