

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, March 3, 1972

The House met at 11 a.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

ACTION OF PROTECTIVE STAFF RESPECTING DELIVERY OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS TO PRESS GALLERY BY MR. ROGER JAY

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members may be aware of the report that appeared in this morning's *Globe and Mail*—I believe the matter was also referred to during the CBC national newscast this morning—having to do with an incident which apparently occurred yesterday involving Mr. Roger Jay, communications officer for the Union of Ontario Indians, when he was delivering certain documents to the House of Commons. It was suggested in the press report and newscast that the gentleman had been treated unfairly in that certain comments had been made by the chief of the protective staff of the House of Commons. I might say I had a conversation this morning with the Sergeant-at-Arms who is responsible for the administration of the protective service. Later in the day he will give me a complete statement in regard to the matter and I will immediately report to the House.

I might say in a preliminary way that Chief Syms has given the assurance that he did not at any time pass any comment or judgment in relation to the contents of the statement proposed to be delivered. I want to assure hon. members, in any event, that I will certainly, on behalf of the House and on behalf of the staff of the House of Commons, extend apologies to this gentleman if in any way we have been at fault. Whether we are or not, we still express regret if any inconvenience was caused to this distinguished person who was here on official business and had every right to call on the press gallery as he proposed to do.

• (1110)

I think it would be unfair to our staff and to the chief if I said more until a formal report has been received which I will pass on to the House later today.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

B.C. INDIAN LAND QUESTION BILL

PROVISION FOR RECOGNITION THAT ABORIGINAL AND HEREDITARY OWNERSHIP NOT EXTINGUISHED

Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni), for Mr. Howard (Skeena), moved for leave to introduce Bill C-166, respecting Indian lands in the province of British Columbia.

Some hon. Members: Explain.

Mr. Barnett: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill is to give parliamentary recognition to the historical fact that the aboriginal and hereditary ownership of the land in what is now British Columbia has not been extinguished. The native Indian people in British Columbia have been concerned about this for many decades and have pressed their case before government without result.

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

POWER

PROPOSED JAMES BAY HYDROELECTRIC DEVELOPMENT—REQUEST BY QUEBEC FOR PERMIT UNDER NAVIGABLE WATERS PROTECTION ACT—INDICATION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Transport. It relates to the proposed James Bay project and the recognition by the minister, as expressed in the House on February 23, that permits are required under the Navigable Waters Protection Act. Has the minister received any request for such permits? I ask this question in view of the fact that on February 23 the minister indicated he was not sure whether a request had been received.

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, to my personal knowledge we have not received any such request. I will inquire of my officials in the department and advise the House in this regard at the earliest opportunity. I suspect that had any such requests come in, I would have been notified of them.

Mr. Stanfield: Has the minister indicated the position of his department to the province of Quebec, that the department insists upon prior approval of this project with regard to navigable waters? Has the minister conveyed the position of his department with regard to the Navigable Waters Protection Act to the government of the province of Quebec?

Mr. Jamieson: Once again, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if this has been conveyed in precisely the manner in which the Leader of the Opposition has put it. Essentially, the Navigable Waters Protection Act works on the basis of an application being filed in the first instance and publicized in the newspapers. It is at that point the application comes forward to us and is dealt with. An interdepartmental committee has been studying this matter and I would imagine the province of Quebec has been advised of the