

Privilege—Mr. Andre

of the steering committee are considered by the committee and, in turn, so are appeals from the ruling of the chairman of the committee. The process of discussing procedure in committees on matters which are reported to the House by way of a motion for concurrence is also well known to hon. members.

In relation to estimates, the use of allotted days is provided for in Standing Orders. In addition, there is recourse to a substantive motion by an hon. member in the private members' hour and, finally, there is recourse to the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization if it is felt that existing procedures are not satisfactory.

Unless steps are taken to change the existing practices which are well established and well known, and which, frankly, have good reasons behind them, I cannot in any way depart from the reasoning of my predecessor or the long established practice that this House will not entertain appeals in relation to the procedures of the standing committees.

Mr. Lawrence: Mr. Speaker, I rise most reluctantly on a point of order to seek clarification of your ruling during the question just before I thought I was going to get an answer from the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). It is my belief, and if I am wrong I hope you will correct me, that out of frustration on this side of the House it is within our responsibility here to try, if necessary, to goad certain cabinet ministers, and in some cases the Prime Minister himself, into making some sort of sensible reply instead of the usual evasions.

I am not sure whether the question I directed to the Prime Minister today was ruled out of order by you, or whether you were under the impression the Prime Minister was not going to reply. It was my impression that he half rose in his seat and was ready to reply when you moved on to recognize another member.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Northumberland-Durham (Mr. Lawrence) raises a proper question concerning my recognition of another member immediately following him at the time he asked a question. There were two difficulties. First, the hon. member put a question which seemed to me to have very argumentative connotations; that is to say, that the reason for holding an investigation had to do with political patronage or political donations. This will surely be recognized by all hon. members as having a clear argumentative connotation attached to it.

In any case, the question was not about to be answered: at least, that was my impression. For both reasons, then, I decided to move on to the recognition of another hon. member. Whether it was clearly for the one or the other reason, I can only console the hon. member by saying that the presence of two difficulties at the same time led me to my decision to go on to another hon. member.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing

[Mr. Speaker.]

this House that the Senate has passed Bill C-33, an act respecting the export from Canada of cultural property and the import into Canada of cultural property illegally exported from foreign states, with amendments, to which the concurrence of this House is desired.

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. John M. Reid (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: 1,253, 1,463, 1,701, 1,751, 1,762, 1,768, 1,776, 1,837, 2,042, 2,055, 2,100, 2,140, 2,206, 2,313, 2,329 and 2,335.

If questions Nos. 1,200, 1,460, 1,685 and 1,743 could be made orders for returns these returns would be tabled immediately.

I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

[Text]

REGIONAL RATES FOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

Question No. 1,253—Mr. Forrestall:

1. What impact does the policy of regional rates for government employees have in terms of reducing the levels of regional disparity?
2. What is the attitude of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion on the issue of regional rates for government employees?
3. What would be the total annual cost of regional rate elimination for all government employees expressed as a percentage of the 1974-75 budget for the Department?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council): I am informed by the Department of Regional Economic Expansion and the Treasury Board Secretariat as follows: 1. There is no known method of accurately measuring the impact.

2. The policy regarding scales of pay and regional rate is decided by the government, and followed by the department.

3. Elimination of regional rates would cost the government an additional \$79,300,000. (Salaries and benefit expenditures) Dree departmental program budget for 1974-75 is \$513,033,000. Cost of \$79,300,000 represents 15.5 per cent of \$513,033,000. Source for DREE Budget: Canada Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1975. (Blue Book of Estimates).