

going. If the Prime Minister is going to have a personal envoy have Mr. Hees work in the area in which he has expertise and demonstrated commitment.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, this question is apparently generated by cuts in budgets, if the hon. member wants the amount of \$600,000. cut out, I can tell her that the cost of operating Mr. Broadbent's new institute is in the neighbourhood of \$3 million. Would she want that cut? I do not think it should be cut, because even though we are going through difficult times, human rights is vital. Mr. Broadbent is a very good person to defend the cause of human rights just as George Hees is an outstanding person to undertake the responsibilities he is undertaking.

The NDP should be ashamed of themselves. This is a cheap shot.

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POINT OF ORDER

COMMENTS DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, earlier during Question Period I may have violated a rule of the House when I referred to the absence of a member, which I ought not to have done. I think it is a generally accepted rule of the House that we not refer to each other's absences. The hon. member for Gloucester may have been present in the House more often than I have because my travels have kept me outside the House. I withdraw any reference to his absence.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to 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 responses to 36 petitions.

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

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

TRANSPORT

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO SECOND REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Labour and Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 109, I wish to table, in both official languages, the government's response to the second report of the Standing Committee on Transport, entitled: Via Rail and the future of railway passenger service.

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

BILL C-43—TABLING OF REPORT

Hon. Andrée Champagne (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the report of the legislative committee on Bill C-43, an Act respecting abortion, without amendments.

Mr. Speaker, with your permission, I would like to make a few comments. Clearly, a bill like Bill C-43 concerns a subject that is prone to controversy and has a high emotional content. I therefore wish to thank all members who sat on the legislative committee and who are to be commended for their serious and thorough approach. They have shown a degree of tolerance and respect that I find admirable and which is very much to the credit of this House.

We heard three ministers and 53 groups and individual witnesses, who provided a broad range of extremely varied views. Altogether, including briefs, telexes and telephone calls, we received nearly 2,000 communications.

Speaking on my own behalf and on behalf of all members of the committee, I also wish to express my thanks to all support staff in areas including research, legal affairs, translation and interpretation, and especially to our clerk. Their dedication greatly simplified my task and that of my predecessor as the chair of this committee.