

took advantage of the latest federal-provincial conference of ministers of communications to consult with my colleague ministers on the federal government's course of action. I expect to be in a position to make an announcement in this regard in the next two or three weeks.

REQUEST FOR RESTORATION OF RECEIVING FACILITIES SEIZED
AT FORT ST. JOHN, B.C.

Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River): Madam Speaker, because of the uncertainty of the government with respect to this particular problem, and because of the questionable jurisdiction under which the CRTC has proceeded to close down certain of these receiving stations—I am making particular reference to the rather autocratic closure of the facilities in Fort St. John, B.C.—would the minister undertake to consult with the CRTC with a view to restoring the equipment that has been confiscated from the people in Fort St. John, a community of 20,000 people, by a criminal law action, and dropping the charges laid against individuals in that community, charges based, as I have said earlier, on rather questionable foundations?

Hon. Francis Fox (Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, I will be pleased to look into the matter for the hon. member. I understand a cable licensed operator is now in Fort St. John who is able to bring in for the viewing public in that area not only Canadian channels but also the three plus one U.S. channels, which is the prevailing rule of thumb applied throughout the country.

My understanding also is that the cable operation that was the subject of a seizure in Fort St. John, was competing with the cable licensed operator. The hon. member says that is not the case. I will be more than pleased to look into the matter to verify the facts.

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● (1500)

PRIVILEGE

MR. DONALD MUNRO—COMMENTS OF MINISTER DURING
QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Madam Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. My question of privilege arises out of some comments which were heard on this side of the House during the course of my questioning the Minister of Communications (Mr. Fox). He interrupted some of my comments using language which was highly derogatory to me, language which I consider unacceptable—

Madam Speaker: Order, order. The Chair did not hear any unparliamentary language, otherwise the Chair would have intervened to ask for the withdrawal of such unparliamentary language. Therefore, the point of order or the question of privilege brought up by the hon. member cannot be heard.

Petitions

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Madam Speaker—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

IMMIGRATION

TABLING OF ANNUAL REPORT ON IMMIGRATION LEVELS

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, under the provisions of Standing Order 41(2) I wish to table the Annual Report to Parliament on immigration levels, in accordance with Section 7 of the Immigration Act, 1976.

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PETITIONS

MR. DOMM—PLIGHT OF HOME OWNERS

Mr. Bill Domm (Peterborough): Madam Speaker, at the suggestion of the minister of housing I have taken the opportunity to meet with 32 families in the Peterborough area. These are not just 32 names, but 32 families who are going to lose their homes. We have carefully documented in my constituency office the names of the mortgage holders, as requested by the minister, the mortgage account numbers and letters from each of the individuals explaining why they are having difficulty meeting their mortgage payments because of high interest rates. I respectfully submit to this House this petition of these 32 real, live families, and I suggest that if these were multiplied by the number of ridings in Canada we would be looking at thousands of people who are apt to lose their homes in the immediate future.

I would also like to tender a copy of the petition to the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Cosgrove) now in his seat so he can immediately start to process these 32 names while the Table officers are processing this petition.

MR. LAWRENCE—VIA RAIL—CUTBACKS IN PASSENGER SERVICE

Hon. Allan Lawrence (Durham-Northumberland): Madam Speaker, I ask leave of the House to lay upon the Table a petition signed by some 8,300 Canadians who are protesting this government's peremptory decision to terminate VIA Rail passenger service between Havelock, Peterborough and Toronto. These petitioners charge the government with using grossly inaccurate figures to justify killing the service which is moving toward profitability, and for which there is no economic alternative form of public transportation.