

[Translation]

Hon. Gérard Pelletier (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat to the hon. member the reply which the Chairman of the CRTC made to him on December 16. The problem with which the Ottawa area is faced stems from a long delayed decision, the reasons for which would be too long to explain here, which applied to Northern Ontario. This decision having now been finalized for Northern Ontario, the Chairman of the CRTC has given the hon. member and myself every assurance that the CRTC is looking into this matter very attentively and that a decision should be rendered within the next few weeks.

[English]

Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I should like to say I promoted those hearings and have been on top of them pushing ever since.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ALLEGED PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS IN CHAD— GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the fact that he has been informed by concerned Canadians of the prosecution of Christians of all denominations in the Republic of Chad would the minister indicate what action has been taken by the government to inform the officials of the Republic of Chad that these acts are reprehensible and are a violation of the UN Charter of Human Rights.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I should like to check further but my recollection is that we did have an investigation into this allegation and that there was no evidence certainly that Canadian residents in Chad were in any way prevented from practising their religion anyway they wished. That is my recollection of the situation. In light of my hon. friend's question I will re-check and if I have a different report I will advise him.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE NO MORE LAY-OFFS AT BOEING 707 REPAIR FACILITY IN WINNIPEG

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Defence. Has the minister any guarantee or what measures he has taken to ensure that the CAE employees who have just received training at the Boeing plant in Seattle and have now been laid off will remain in Winnipeg to overhaul the Boeing 707's when they come to Winnipeg.

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, there has been no change in the government's plan to have the National Defence Boeing

Members' Salaries

707 major repair and overhaul in Winnipeg. It is clear that when that work is done all personnel with experience will have an opportunity to work on those aircraft.

Mr. Whelan: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. In answer to the hon. member for Mackenzie when he referred to farmers submitting claims I may have misinformed him. Where there is any claim the claimant must provide a statement certifying the size of the cow herd as of December 13, 1974. This statement must be signed by the owner and certified by either a provincial or federal Department of Agriculture officer. Payment will be made at the end of April only if payments are to be made.

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

● (1550)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF COMMONS ACT, THE SALARIES ACT AND THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES ACT

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of Privy Council) moved that Bill C-44, to amend the Senate and House of Commons Act, the Salaries Act and the Parliamentary Secretaries Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates.

He said: Mr. Speaker, one of the most distasteful tasks for any minister is to take the lead in proposing a bill which, among other things, increases his own salary as a member of parliament and as a minister. Similarly, I can understand the feelings of my colleagues in the House from all sides, and from the government, who have to take a position on the bill now before us. There is no way, however, in which we can escape the responsibility. All legislative bodies are in the same position, and when I look at the action taken by some provincial legislatures and some municipal councils to increase their rates of compensation it reinforces my view that we, here, would be derelict in our duty if we did not face up to the necessity of bringing our remuneration into line with the levels that prevail elsewhere in private and public life.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sharp: In saying this, I speak as a member of parliament and not as a member of the government. The initiative for an increase in members' indemnities and allowances has come from private members. Members of all parties in this House and on all sides of this House have urged upon the government the necessity for an increase. Private members cannot, of course, take action which imposes any charge on the revenues; only the government can do that.

On this particular occasion, Madam Speaker, the government has received from an ad hoc group of members some definite recommendations which have been useful to