

[Text]

*LAW REFORM COMMISSION—PROFESSIONAL AND SPECIAL SERVICES

Question No. 236—**Mr. Woolliams**

With reference to the item Professional and Special Services at page 13-32 of the 1978-79 Estimates for the Law Reform Commission of Canada (a) what specifically are the (i) Professional services (ii) Special services (b) to whom would the expenditure of \$1,035,000 be paid (c) what necessitates an increase of \$85,000 over the previous year for this purpose?

[English]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Justice): (a) (i) Professional services covers the work in legal research and related disciplines and management expertise in operations and communications supplied to the commission. (ii) Special services includes translation, computer services, temporary office assistance, editorial service and service fees charged by Supply and Services Canada.

(b) The major part of the \$1,035,000, about nine tenths, would be paid to consultants, most having qualifications in law with a few having special competence in medicine, ethics, sociology and psychology, and other expertise necessary to the research program. Of the remaining one tenth, about half would be paid for the services of professional translators and the rest to suppliers of miscellaneous services such as computing and temporary office assistance and to Supply and Services Canada.

(c) The increase of \$85,000 (i.e., 9 per cent) over the previous year is made necessary because of cost increases.

Mr. Speaker: Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

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POINT OF ORDER

MR. BEATTY—DELAY IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS

Mr. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I have taken the opportunity to look at the list of answers to questions on the order paper which was tabled today. On a number of occasions I have brought to the attention of the parliamentary secretary the fact that a number of questions of mine have been sitting on the order paper, some of them in one incarnation or another, since January 26, 1978. We are just coming up to a year now for two of them.

If the parliamentary secretary has any justification for his ineptitude in delaying his response to these questions, if he feels that to do so is too costly or if he feels it is too time consuming to do so, or if it is simply that he feels incapable of doing his job and getting the officials in the various departments to supply him with the information, or if he can otherwise justify my doing so, I will withdraw those questions

Railways

that I have on the order paper. I would like his guidance on this matter.

I would point out to the parliamentary secretary that the House has now waited a further month since Christmas yet not a single response has been made to these questions, many of which have been on the order paper for many months and some for almost a year. Unless there is some indication from him that he is prepared to give the House an adequate explanation of his refusal to do his job, or that he intends to advance reasonable arguments to persuade me that I should withdraw the questions, I intend on a regular basis to bring this matter to the parliamentary secretary's attention at this time in our proceedings until some progress is made.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Pinard (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult to please everybody. Today Canadians will realize that we have made an exceptional effort. We have answered some hundred questions and I do not appreciate the hon. member's complaints about the work we, on this side of the House, accomplish. Mr. Speaker, on many occasions I have had the opportunity to express my opinion on the hon. member's reactions. I strongly invite him to read not only the list of the numbers tabled today, but also the answers to the numerous questions asked. It will add to his culture. As for the rest, I urge him to be patient.

MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S.O. 26

[English]

RAILWAYS

PRAIRIE RAIL ACTION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I would ask leave, seconded by the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom), to move the adjournment of the House under Standing Order 26 for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter requiring urgent consideration, namely, the serious threat to western rural communities and the farmer-owned elevator system as a result of recommendations contained in the Prairie Rail Action Committee report which go far beyond the committee's terms of reference in at least two instances; and also because the committee recommends the abandonment of 1,416 miles of rail lines based on conclusions arising out of inadequate, inappropriate and insufficient evidence, and fails to give sufficient weight to the evidence for the retention of these rail lines; all of which makes it urgent that the Prairie Rail Action Committee report be discussed in parliament forthwith so that the government can indicate its intentions and members can express their views with respect to the committee's recommendations.