

Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act

Inflation Board playing the role of enjoiner, propagandist, adviser, and so on, with legal action then being taken by the administrator and with an appeal from that. This is my feeling, Mr. Speaker. I repeat, the government does not have a closed mind on this. If we find better ways of achieving the result—and I hope we all want to have a lower inflation rate in this country—the government is open to persuasion.

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● (1500)

VETERANS AFFAIRS**REQUEST FOR PROGRESS REPORT ON CONSIDERATION OF PENSIONS FOR FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR**

Mr. William Knowles (Norfolk-Halifax): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Veterans Affairs. Tomorrow, it will be one week since the promised statement on legislation implementing recommendations of the standing committee. I wonder if the minister can report on what progress he has made with his cabinet colleagues to permit him to announce the introduction of legislation to assist former prisoners of war.

Hon. Daniel J. MacDonald (Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the progress has been very good to date, and possibly consultation will be completed tomorrow.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT**TABLING OF REPORT OF COMMISSION RESPECTING PROVINCE OF ALBERTA**

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It is my duty, pursuant to section 19 of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act, chapter E-2, Revised Statutes of Canada, 1970, to lay upon the table of the House a certified copy of the report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Alberta, 1976.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: I recognize the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby. I suspect his point of order pertains to the difficulties about which he posed certain questions respecting the Anti-Inflation Board. I simply ask the hon. member's indulgence and invite him to delay making his representations until the conclusion of routine proceedings.

[Mr. Trudeau.]

[Translation]

MAIN ESTIMATES, 1976-77**STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT OF TREASURY BOARD**

Hon. Jean Chrétien (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present a message which Your Honour read to the House and by which His Excellency the Governor General is transmitting estimates for the service of Canada for the financial year ending March 31, 1977.

Mr. Speaker, the main estimates for 1976-77, which I am tabling today, amount to \$38.4 billion for budgetary items and \$1.1 billion for non-budgetary items. They include for the first time old age security and guaranteed income supplement payments, which in other years were paid out of a special account.

Throughout the current fiscal year, I have—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I feel the hon. President of the Treasury Board is making a statement as a minister and this calls for an answer from representatives of all political parties in the House. In addition, there will be a question later. If such is the minister's intention, I urge him to continue, if not we shall have to remain at the document tabling stage.

[English]

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, it is also my impression that the hon. gentleman slipped rapidly from the tabling of documents to statements by ministers without Your Honour calling that order of business. I was assuming that was the case and that it would be subject to the usual restrictions and the rights of hon. members on this side of the House.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have the indication now from the minister that it is not his intention to make a statement at this time, but simply to table the document.

[Translation]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I feel I must make a point clear. I believe it is in keeping with tradition to make a statement under those circumstances and shall do so after meeting with the other parties' representatives. However if it is deemed preferable that I do not make a statement, Mr. Speaker, we can—

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I think it is now evident that the President of the Treasury Board seeks to make a statement which, of course, will be replied to by other hon. members and there will be a question period. There are still a number of routine proceedings, not the least of which is the point of order of the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby. Therefore, I wonder if hon. members might agree that the statement by the minister, as has been our recent practice, might be deferred until the conclusion of routine proceedings in order to permit his statement, representations by other hon. members and questions to follow.