

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, December 7, 1970

The House met at 2 p.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

STATUS OF WOMEN

TABLING OF REPORT OF ROYAL COMMISSION

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I should like to table copies in the two official languages of the report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada.

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TRADE

TABLING OF AIDE-MÉMOIRE AND NOTE TO UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Mr. André Ouellet (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as promised by the Secretary of State for External Affairs on November 25 last, I have the honour of tabling on his behalf the memorandum and note sent to the American government on the trade policy of the United States.

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[English]

PROCEDURE AND ORGANIZATION

CONCURRENCE IN FIRST REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Grant Deachman (Vancouver Quadra) moved that the first report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization, presented to the House on Friday, December 4, 1970, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

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BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACTS

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING DISSOLUTION AND TERM OF PARLIAMENT

Mr. Doug Rowland (Selkirk) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-206, to amend the British North America Acts, 1867 to 1965 (Duration of House of Commons).

Some hon. Members: Explain.

Mr. Rowland: Mr. Speaker, this bill is designed to be a small step in the direction of returning the focus of government in this country to Parliament, where it

belongs. The measures advocated in the bill would, hopefully, increase the influence of the individual Members of Parliament through broadening the range of issues upon which free votes would be possible, thereby strengthening Parliament's role in the policy formation process. Specifically, the bill would take away the right of the Prime Minister to recommend dissolution of Parliament and place that power in the hands of Parliament by establishing a set term of four years for Parliament, except—

• (2:10 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have to interrupt the hon. member to remind him that he cannot make the statement at this time which he would normally make on second reading. He can only explain the bill briefly. I am not sure whether the hon. member considers his statement to be brief, but he should bring it to a close as quickly as possible.

Mr. Rowland: For me, Mr. Speaker, this is brief. I will bring it to a close as quickly as possible. The bill establishes a set term of four years for Parliament, except in the eventuality that the government is defeated on a specific motion of want of confidence, or if it is defeated on a bill or a portion of a bill—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Unfortunately for the hon. member, the standards of brevity which apply are the Speaker's standards, and the hon. member has exceeded those standards. I must therefore ask the House whether the hon. member has leave to introduce the said bill.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

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AUDITOR GENERAL

PROVISION FOR APPOINTMENT, SALARY AND DUTIES

On the order: Introduction of Bills:
December 4, 1970—Mr. Baldwin—Bill intituled: "An Act respecting the Auditor General of Canada".

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member will suspect that the Chair has serious reservations about the bill in respect, of course, of its financial aspects. The hon. member knows that a bill which has financial aspects has to be preceded by a royal recommendation. The hon. member very imaginatively has seized upon the recommendation which had been received in respect of a bill which was before the House previously and has been withdrawn. The hon.