

Mr. Howie: Madam Speaker, will the minister immediately bring forward the small business bond which he mentioned in his recent budget-like economic statement?

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Economic-like budget statement.

Mr. MacEachen: Madam Speaker, it is my intention at a very early date to bring forward at least the guidelines which will be the basis of this particular program.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. MacEachen: The legislation itself could not be ready and it could not be passed for some considerable time.

An hon. Member: Why not?

Mr. MacEachen: Because it is part of the Income Tax Act. As I recall, I made a commitment at that time that I would allow the bill, or the draft bill to be made available for further comment. In order to avoid that anticipated delay, it is my intention to make available the ground rules with respect to the small business development bond at a very early date.

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● (1500)

CONVENTION CENTRES

GOVERNMENT POLICY—CENTRE IN OTTAWA

Hon. Michael Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Small Business. Some weeks ago the minister made a statement in the House that a convention centre policy was under review and would be available shortly.

Would the minister advise the House whether such a policy is still under development, and whether the rumoured approval of the Ottawa Convention Centre will be part of that policy? When will the policy be made available to the House?

[Translation]

Hon. Charles Lapointe (Minister of State, Small Businesses): Madam Speaker, as far as the development of a national convention centre policy is concerned, I want to indicate that the cabinet is still developing this policy and the announcement made this week with regard to the Ottawa Convention Centre is not part of this policy.

[English]

Mr. Wilson: Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is to the same minister. Would the minister advise the House when government policy on convention centres will be available to assist people in Toronto and throughout Ontario in the planning of convention centres?

Could he also tell us in what way the Ottawa Convention Centre will not be part of that policy, and whether the conven-

Constitutional Renewal

tion centre here will replace the convention centre in Toronto in terms of funding by the government?

Mr. Lapointe (Charlevoix): Madam Speaker, the policy will be made available shortly. With regard to the help accorded to the Ottawa Convention Centre, or the Rideau Centre, that is part of planned federal participation in the centre by the Department of Public Works.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): You are wonderful fellows.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE

Second report of Standing Committee on Agriculture, in both official languages—Mr. Tessier.

[Editor's Note: For text of the above report, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]

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PETITION

REQUEST BY PEOPLE OF ONTARIO FOR LOWER INTEREST RATES TO ASSIST HOME OWNERS AND SMALL BUSINESS

Madam Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the Deputy Clerk of the House has laid on the Table the eighth report of the Clerk of Petitions stating that he has examined the petition presented by the hon. member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) and finds that it meets the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

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THE CONSTITUTION

STATEMENT ON MEETING OF FIRST MINISTERS TO DISCUSS RENEWAL

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, three weeks to the day after the Quebec referendum, I have the pleasure to report to this House on yesterday's meeting of first ministers on the renewal of the constitution. My remarks will be brief because I do not want to impose upon hon. members' good will on this opposition day and also because the leaders of opposition parties, as well as private members, will undoubtedly want to ask me further questions on this subject. I would rather use the time allocated to me to answer specific questions.