

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, June 25, 1969

The house met at 2 p.m.

PRIVILEGE

MR. BARNETT—COMPLAINT RESPECTING REPLY GIVEN IN ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

Mr. Barnett: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. My question of privilege arises from the proceedings on the adjournment motion on Monday last. My name was listed for debate under the heading, "Post Office Department—Courtenay, B.C., letter carrier service".

Before debate commenced I drew attention to the fact the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury) was not in the house, and asked if someone present was authorized to answer me on his behalf. The Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Forest) said that he was.

On June 10, I asked the President of the Treasury Board "When the government intends to lift the freeze". My question arose from a reply given me by the Postmaster General (Mr. Kierans) during the adjournment debate, in which he told me, as reported at page 8815 of *Hansard*:

Courtenay is one of 24 communities where a letter carrier service is justified under our criteria, but where for lack of funds we cannot introduce it until such time as this freeze is lifted.

When the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council rose to reply to my statement on Monday night he stated he was answering on behalf of the Postmaster General, and as reported at page 10579 of *Hansard* said:

I wish to point out that the minister has already answered a similar question earlier—

This was a contradiction of the assurance he had given earlier that he was authorized to answer for the President of the Treasury Board.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that while under the provisions of Standing Order 40 no minister is required to answer either on his own behalf or through a parliamentary secretary, if an answer is given it should be an answer to the question raised, and should be made by

or on behalf of the minister under whose jurisdiction the subject matter of the question lies.

Mr. Speaker: I suggest to the hon. member that he may have a grievance or perhaps a point of order, but I doubt very much that the point he is now making can be accepted as a question of privilege. In any event, since there is no motion before the house we will now proceed with the ordinary business of the house.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN THE SPEAKER'S GALLERY OF INDIAN LEADERS

[*Translation*]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, before reading my statement, I should like to bring to the attention of the house the presence in the Speaker's gallery of a group of Indian leaders representing all provinces. May I welcome those citizens on the occasion of their visit.

[*English*]

INDIAN AFFAIRS

STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT POLICY

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to place the government's statement on Indian policy before the house. The statement outlines the views the government brings to the consultations which must now be carried on with the Indian people and the provincial governments.

Throughout a year's consultation with Indian leaders, the government has reviewed its programs for Indians and their effects on the present situation of the Indian people. The review has shown that this is the right time to change long standing policies. The Indian people have shown their determination that present conditions shall not persist.

From the early days of this country, a trustee relationship of a highly paternalistic