

that the United Mine Workers, in a meeting with the minister, are reported to have requested a new president at Devco.

My question is: What are the plans of the government for the presidency of Devco? Is it intended to continue with Mr. Rance, or is there a change to be made?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government and Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations): Honourable senators, the purpose of the review is precisely to make recommendations of that kind to the government.

NATIONAL STATISTICS COUNCIL

MEMBERSHIP—REGIONAL REPRESENTATION—REQUEST FOR ANSWER

On the calling of Delayed Answers:

Hon. Charles McElman: Honourable senators, at this stage of the order paper, could I draw to the attention of the Deputy Leader of the Government that on October 9 last I drew to the attention of the Leader of the Government in the Senate that the minister responsible for Statistics Canada had just formed a National Statistics Council which would advise the Chief Statistician of Canada? I also drew to your attention that there were some shortcomings in the regional and provincial representation. Then, on October 28, the Deputy Leader of the Government filed a reply which stated that:

The concerns raised by the senator have been brought to the attention of the minister responsible for Statistics Canada. The minister is looking into ways to rectify the situation.

Could the Leader of the Government perhaps make a further inquiry—almost five months have passed now—to see whether any steps have been taken to correct the regional representation on this board?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government and Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations): Honourable senators, subject to correction, I thought I heard the other day that some further appointments to that council are imminent.

Senator McElman: I shall check it. I hope you will, too.

THE SENATE

DELAY IN PRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS— QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

Hon. Ann Elizabeth Bell: Honourable senators, I would like to raise a question of privilege before we go to Orders of the Day. I think I could do this under rule 33—but I am not terribly sure about that.

There is a considerable delay, as you know, between the holding of our committee meetings and the publishing of the proceedings. I realize that a committee is looking into this question, but it does hamper our ability to operate in an efficient way in carrying out the work that we are trying to do.

[Senator MacEachen.]

I would like to give as an example, because it is a current one, the situation concerning our Banking, Trade and Commerce Committee. I received today my first copy of the proceedings resulting from the hearings held on the subject matter of Bill C-37, the Softwood Lumber Export Charge Act. The meeting took place on February 11, 1987, if I remember correctly, and it is only today, over a month later, that I received the printed proceedings. It is absolutely useless to receive it at this time. If we had been studying an actual bill rather than the subject matter, it would have been through all its stages by now.

I also have in my hand today, for the first time, the second proceedings of the Banking, Trade and Commerce Committee's study of the subject matter. Those meetings were held on Wednesday, February 18, and Thursday, February 19; so that is only a delay of three weeks.

I know that this has been a problem for years and years. So I decided to see what they were doing in the other place. I sent for the reports of whatever the relevant committee is in the House of Commons. I received those reports and they are on my desk here. But if they had to be sent to Vancouver Island, British Columbia, by Canada Post as first class mail, forget it! As it is, copies were sent to me there a week ago Tuesday; they still had not arrived when I left on Monday morning, although I received Monday's mail before I left.

Now, if you take into account the postal service—and don't forget that we were adjourned for two weeks—as well as the unacceptable delay between our hearings and the production of the committee proceedings, how on earth can we keep up with the work that we are expected to do here, and how can we expect to have available the information that is so necessary for committee members?

I will not make a motion under rule 33, but is there any way that we can improve efficiency, even if it means increases in staff and equipment? Perhaps such an increase would expedite the production of the printed proceedings. I think it is awfully important.

The Hon. the Speaker: If I may respond to the honourable senator as chairman of the Internal Economy Committee, I shall provide a report some time next week which will address the concerns of the senator.

Senator Bell: Thank you, Your Honour.

PRAIRIE GRAIN ADVANCE PAYMENTS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING

On the Order:

Resuming the debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Barootes, seconded by the Honourable Senator Doyle, for the second reading of the Bill C-12, An Act to amend the Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act.—(*Honourable Senator Olson P.C.*)

Hon. H.A. Olson: Honourable senators, I moved the adjournment of this debate yesterday because there are a number of things that I want to draw to the attention of the