

TRANSPORT

BRITISH COLUMBIA—AD HOC PARLIAMENATARY COMMITTEE ON LIGHTSTATIONS—NOTICE OF INQUIRY

Hon. Pat Carney: Honourable senators, I give notice that on Wednesday, December 14, 1994, I will call the attention of the Senate to the findings of the Ad Hoc Parliamentary Committee on Lightstations, which travelled to British Columbia from November 22 to November 25, 1994, to hear the testimony of witnesses in four centres of British Columbia.

SPLIT LAKE CREE FIRST NATION FLOODED LAND BILL

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

Leave having been given to revert to Presentation of Reports from Standing or Special Committees:

Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk, Chairperson of the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, presented the following report:

Thursday, December 1, 1994

The Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples has the honour to presents its

FIFTH REPORT

Your Committee, to which was referred Bill C-36, An Act respecting the Split Lake Cree First Nation and the settlement of matters arising from an agreement relating to the flooding of land, has examined the said Bill in obedience to its Order of Reference dated November 17, 1994, and now reports the same without amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

A. RAYNELL ANDREYCHUK
Chairperson

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the third time?

On motion of Senator Petten, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for third reading at the next sitting of the Senate.

QUESTION PERIOD

ELECTIONS CANADA

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSIONS— INTRODUCTION OF NEW LEGISLATION—REQUEST FOR PRE-STUDY

Hon. John Lynch-Staunton (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, last Friday, November 25, the House of

Commons Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs presented its fifty-first report, which contains a number of recommendations supported by draft legislation described as “an act to provide for the establishment of Electoral Boundaries Commissions and the readjustment of electoral boundaries.”

We can all recall the debate earlier this year surrounding Bill C-18, to suspend the operation of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act. Bill C-18 was passed only after this side convinced the government of the validity of a number of amendments, which were agreed to with one modification.

Can the Leader of the Government in the Senate inform us when the government intends to introduce this legislation, or some modification of it, in the House of Commons?

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, as my friend has indicated, the committee has done its work. The government will undoubtedly bring legislation forward in the new year. I do not anticipate that legislation will be brought forward before the end of this month.

Senator Lynch-Staunton: Would the Leader of the Government agree that, because of the particular interest which senators have shown in the important matter of electoral boundaries, perhaps this legislation would be an ideal candidate for pre-study by the Senate?

Senator Fairbairn: Honourable senators, indeed that legislation is important. It had somewhat of a rollicking passage through this house. I hope that the legislation will come forward in more than ample time to allow each house of Parliament the fullest possible debate and consideration on the matter.

READJUSTMENT OF ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES BASED ON 1991 CENSUS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. John Lynch-Staunton (Leader of the Opposition): Whatever the timetable of the government on this legislation, does it endorse the conclusion of the committee as described in its report, which I quote:

The committee also believes that it is highly important that the readjustment of electoral boundaries on the basis of the 1991 census should be in place for the next federal general election.

Does the government endorse this statement and will it confirm that, whatever its timetable may be on the new legislation regarding electoral boundaries, everything will be in place in time for the next federal election?

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, at this point, I cannot foresee the legislation as it will be specifically drafted.

However, as we went through the process of drafting the legislation in the months preceding its return to the House of Commons and the subsequent study by the Commons committee, the intention was clear that the government wishes the electoral boundaries for the next election to reflect my honourable friend's considerations.