

of Commons, and I would be pleased to pass this on to you if it would be of assistance in your investigation into this matter.

I would just like to say that this is a very fundamental and serious matter that you are considering. That has been stated by a number of my colleagues. The charge that was made by the Minister of Finance is entirely different from the red herring raised by the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Evans). He mentioned that I had raised a question concerning a constituent of mine in the House of Commons. Sir, I did that at her express request and with her full permission. That is entirely different from the way in which the matter was raised in the first place by the Minister of Finance.

One of the things that you will know, Sir, is that we as Members of Parliament have what we consider a relationship with our constituents that is comparable to a lawyer-client relationship or to a doctor-patient relationship in that it is one of true confidentiality. That is how we operate in the House. That is exactly how we take information from people in trust and confidence. We pass it on to Ministers of the Crown in that way.

• (1650)

I feel very strongly about this, Mr. Speaker, because some years ago I raised a question of privilege in the House, something I do not do very often. It has happened only two or three times in the years I have been here. Members of the Ottawa Police Force and the RCMP had come into my office to examine documents that were supposedly in my files. They came in to look through my files. Your illustrious predecessor, Sir, Mr. Speaker Lucien Lamoureux, ruled at that time that those materials were confidential to the individual Member concerned and that no one should have the right to release that information. I pass information on in the same way to Minister of the Crown, knowing, I hope, that they will respect that ruling in the same way. What will happen, if this kind of exhibition the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) has given us is allowed to stand, is that confidentiality will be broken for all time. The trust we have established with individuals across this country will be jeopardized. That, Sir, will endanger the whole structure of, and the way in which the House of Commons operates.

I feel very deeply about this, Mr. Speaker, and I ask you to consider that the issue of trust and confidence of individual Members of Parliament is very much at stake here.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

PETITIONS

MR. DOMM—PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE BOUNDARIES OF THE RIDEAU AREA OF THE GREAT LAKES REGION

Mr. Bill Domm (Peterborough): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from employees of Canadian National Railways who

Order Paper Questions

are requesting the assistance of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Axworthy) and those officials concerned in the CNR in placing political pressure wherever it might be placed in order to cancel a proposed plan to change the seniority boundaries of the Rideau area of the Great Lakes region. The petitioners are concerned that their seniority will be adversely affected as changes to the boundaries that determine seniority, namely the boundaries of the Rideau area of the Great Lakes region, are being contemplated by the CNR.

* * *

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Pierre Bussières (for the Solicitor General) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-13, an Act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act.

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

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. John Evans (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 89, 129, 135, 169, 187, 258 and 380.

[Text]

DFO—PERSONS ENGAGED IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

Question No. 89—**Mr. Howie:**

How many persons engaged in public relations, media relations or publicity are employed by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans?

Hon. Pierre De Bané (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): As of December 8, 1983, the number of persons engaged in public relations, media relations or publicity employed by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, is:

| | |
|------------------|----|
| DFO headquarters | 24 |
| Regional offices | 23 |
| Total | 47 |

INCUBATOR PROGRAM

Question No. 129—**Mr. Stewart:**

Is there an Incubator Program and, if so, for each fiscal year since its inception, what amount was spent by the National Research Council under the Program?

Mr. Rolland Dion (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State for Economic Development and Minister of State for