

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, August 31, 1987

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

TABLING AND REFERENCE OF ANNUAL REPORT

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 67(2), I have the honour to table the annual report of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and pursuant to Standing Order 67(4), the report is deemed to have been referred to the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture.

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[*Translation*]

PETITIONS

OPPOSITION TO TAX ON FOOD

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, today, I welcome this opportunity to table two more petitions asking this Government to listen to the Canadian people, and especially to the many representations I and my party colleagues have made to the Members of the Party in power, the Progressive Conservative Party, all on the subject of proposed tax on food.

Conservatives in the Quebec Caucus have already said they do not want the Government to tax food, and we agree.

Mr. Speaker, the petition I am tabling on behalf of the constituents who visited my riding and especially the By Ward Market this summer, reads as follows:

Whereas since September, 1984, the federal Government has imposed on Canadian taxpayers 25 new taxes or tax increases, in particular on medical and dental supplies, snack foods, candy and soft drinks;

Whereas the federal Government in its tax reform proposal has studied the possibility of imposing on Canadians a general tax on goods and services, including food;

And whereas food constitutes a vital element of day-to-day life, and imposition of this tax would have the effect of seriously penalizing certain

categories of taxpayers, such as the aged, families, the unemployed, low income taxpayers, youth and students;

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to reject all measures that would have the effect of imposing a sales tax on food products.

● (1110)

[*English*]

UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO FAIR ORAL HEARINGS BEFORE REFUGEE BOARD

Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant): Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise to present a petition from people mainly in Atlantic Canada opposed to the Draconian measures in Bill C-55 and call upon this House to reject the Bill and bring in one that is much more fair.

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions. The first deals with Bill C-55 which threatens Canada's traditional commitment to assisting refugees and sets out measures designed to keep most refugee claimants out of the country as opposed to ensuring that genuine claimants are given protection.

The petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to ensure that Government and Parliament withdraw Bill C-55 and substitute legislation embodying the principles of fair and quick oral hearings for claimants before a refugee board independent of the Immigration Commission, universal access to such hearings for every applicant in Canada, and the right to appeal on the basis of fact.

CANADA POST—OPPOSITION TO CORPORATE PLAN

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): The second petition deals with the Post Office.

Whereas the federal Government's proposal to seek financial self-sufficiency by 1988 for Canada Post Corporation will result in cut-backs, deterioration in service and consequently will be at the expense of service to Canadian consumers, the petitioners call upon Parliament to instruct the Government to make improved service the highest priority of Canada Post and abandon the policy of closing rural Post Offices and cancelling rural routes.

UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO FAIR ORAL HEARINGS BEFORE REFUGEE BOARD

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from people in the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario concerning Bill C-55. They note that a standing committee of Parliament proposed a new procedure for