

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, February 12, 1987

The House met at 11 a.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT

TABLING OF 1987 REPORT OF SASKATCHEWAN ELECTORAL
BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

Mr. Speaker: It is my duty pursuant to Section 9 of the Representation Act, 1985, Chapter 8, Statutes of Canada, 1986, to lay upon the table a certified copy of the 1987 report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Saskatchewan.

Pursuant to the Act, this report is deemed to have been referred to the Standing Committee on Elections, Privileges and Procedure.

* * *

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER—AFRICAN VISIT

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Parliamentary Secretary with regard to business of the House and, specifically, statements by Ministers. We were under the impression last week that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) would be making a statement as a result of his trip to Africa. Almost a week has passed. Could the Parliamentary Secretary give us some idea of when we might expect to have that statement by the Prime Minister?

Mr. Doug Lewis (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I will make inquiries. I will endeavour to communicate with my colleague with regard to exactly when the statement on South Africa can be made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) if, in fact, there is going to be one made.

PETITIONS

RIDEAU HALL—PUBLIC'S ACCESS TO GROUNDS

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I have been tabling a series of petitions in the House as fast as people can sign them. This petition is from people of my riding, of the National Capital Region, and also from several tourists who have come to Ottawa. They say that whereas a decision to close Rideau Hall grounds was made by the National Capital Commission, the Department of Public Works, the RCMP and the office of the Governor General without prior notice; and whereas the closure of this attractive and tranquil park affects thousands of visitors to the capital from across the country who held Canada's uniquely accessible Rideau Hall as a symbol of the trust, openness and democracy of which Canadians are so justly proud; and whereas area residents from the entire national capital region who have used and enjoyed the grounds of Rideau Hall, recognizing the security concerns that prompted the closure decision, cannot accept a blanket closure of the 120-acre park to public access; the undersigned, your petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to open the decision for consultation with citizens' representatives of the large and growing opposition in order that a *modus vivendi* be created that would satisfy both the Government's security concerns and the public right to access.

● (1110)

REQUEST TO WITHDRAW TARIFF ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE
BOOKS

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): I have ten petitions from my constituents and Canadians from across Ontario and several other provinces. These people wish to lay a grievance before the Government and the Parliament of Canada. They state that whereas the Government of Canada has imposed a retaliatory tariff on imported books in the English language which has limited the access of Canadians to literature and information; and whereas the tariff has little negative effect on the publishing industry in the United States yet penalizes Canada's consumers, book publishers and distributors in Canada's culture; and whereas rising book prices have placed a strain on book acquisition programs and policies of our nation's public and specialized libraries; the undersigned petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to rescind this tariff which threatens irreparable harm to the Canadian book industry and compromises federal policy on cultural industries in respect of free trade negotiations.