

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, September 21, 1987

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

CONSTITUTIONAL ACCORD, 1987

PRESENTATION OF REPORT OF SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE

Mr. Chris Speyer (Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour this morning of laying upon the Table the report of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons, reporting on the 1987 Constitutional Accord.

I want to make two brief comments with respect to the report. Our report concludes that the Accord is an historic act of national reconciliation between French-speaking Canadians and English-speaking Canadians. It is supported by 11 First Ministers representing all major political Parties in the country.

It had its origins in promises made to Québécois during and after the Quebec referendum of 1980. We believe that its detailed terms have to be looked at in light of this great purpose and objective but we have also reached a conclusion, after reviewing 301 written briefs and hearing 131 witnesses over five weeks of testimony, that these detailed terms are in fact good, and good for all of Canada.

I would also like to point out the tremendous debt that we owe to the committees' directorate at the House of Commons, Mr. Eugene Morawski, Miss Elizabeth Kingston and Andrew Johnson, for the prodigious effort they extended on behalf of all the committee in allowing us to have this report ready for today. I do not want to neglect the many people who helped them, such as typists, translators and others. We owe a great debt to the Committees Branch.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PETITION

UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO FAIR ORAL HEARINGS BEFORE REFUGEE BOARD

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour and duty to present a petition from a number of residents of the City of Toronto who object to Bill C-55 on the ground that it will have the likely effect of excluding from Canada many people who have arrived asking to make refugee claims who are in fact real refugees according to the standards of law.

It points out that there was a better system proposed by the Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration, which has widespread support from religious, legal and other public groups in Canada. Therefore, they request the Government and Parliament to withdraw Bill C-55 and substitute for it legislation embodying the principles of fair and quick oral hearings of claims of refugee claimants before a refugee board that is independent of the Immigration Commission and universal access to such hearings for every applicant in Canada, and the right to appeal on the basis of fact. In duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

* * *

• (1110)

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered Orally are indicated by an Asterisk.)

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of State and Minister of State (Treasury Board)): Mr. Speaker, Question No. 169 will be answered today.

[*Text*]

RCMP—COST OF SERVICES TO NEW BRUNSWICK AND NEWFOUNDLAND

Question No. 169—**Mr. Howie:**

During 1986, in (a) New Brunswick (b) Newfoundland (i) did the number of RCMP persons deployed decline and, if so, for what reason (ii) how many persons were deployed and what amount was paid to the Government for their services (iii) what rate per person was charged for police services?

Hon. James Kelleher (Solicitor General of Canada): (a) & (b) (ii) During fiscal years 1985-86 and 1986-87 the number of RCMP regular members in provincial policing duties in New Brunswick and Newfoundland declined by 14 in each province. The reasons for decline are the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary and the New Brunswick Highway Patrol