

Privilege—Mr. Alexander

company of—.” As a result of this very cheap trick I intend to use the list he gave me to send invitations to the ceremonies being held on Friday, on my own stationery. I hope the minister will govern himself accordingly in future.

Hon. John Roberts (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, on the same question of privilege, I am astonished—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Roberts: A series of these celebrations will be taking place across the country. I could not possibly attend all of them although I would like to be able to do so. These are celebrations undertaken by the government under the responsibility of my ministry quite properly for the purpose of ensuring that those most likely to be able to take advantage of the provisions of this act—

An hon. Member: —are the Liberals.

Mr. Roberts: —will be informed of the details of how they may do so. It seemed to me appropriate to involve members of parliament from all parties in the celebration of this extremely progressive legislation. Members of all political parties in the area concerned have been invited, and in many cases they have accepted. Indeed, colleagues of the hon. gentleman have wholeheartedly accepted invitations to take part in similar celebrations.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) has a fascinating grievance. However, in its substance or form it is not a question of privilege. Both sides have made a contribution to this interesting grievance, but in so far as it relates to a question of privilege under the terms of the rules and precedents of this House, the discussion ought to stop there.

Mr. Jelinek: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order stemming from the earlier exchange between the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Chrétien)—I am sorry he is not in the House—and the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings (Mr. Hees). I take exception to the fact that at the conclusion of his answer and, after he sat down, the minister was yelling my name across the floor attempting to insinuate that the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings' attempts to clarify the reasons for the country's high level of foreign deficit are contradictory to my request made earlier this week for exempting small businesses from the government's textile quotas.

My point of order is to clarify this misleading information that the minister was trying to yell across the floor. Our party's position is that at no time—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. If the hon. member seeks to rectify some irregularity in today's proceedings I would have to be persuaded that such an irregularity has formed part of

[Mr. Alexander.]

the record before giving him an opportunity to raise, by way of opposition thereto, the position of his party or himself in respect of the particular argument. At the moment what the hon. member describes is not something that has formed part of the record in today's proceedings. If it has, I would be prepared to hear the hon. member tomorrow. At the moment he is describing something that could be part of today's proceedings. I cannot conclude how that could form a point of order because the irregularity would have to be part of the proceedings before I could give the hon. member the floor.

Mr. Murta: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order and I will be very brief. It arises out of the question I was attempting to put to the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen).

● (1510)

In retrospect, I agree that the explanation to my question may have been somewhat lengthy. Nevertheless, I felt it was necessary before the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs could answer the question to put a lot of pertinent information on record. The question, really, had to do with the incredible bungling of CIDA. If I may have your indulgence, Sir, I would ask for the unanimous consent of the House to permit the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs, who is in charge of CIDA, to reply to my question. Does he know about the problem, and will something be done about it?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have taken the decision in respect of the hon. member's question, as I have in respect of questions asked in similar circumstances by many other hon. members, that the information sought ought to be sought in some other way. The hon. member put forward greatly detailed information about a particular transaction. I have often said to the hon. member's colleagues in respect of similar questions which have been raised, as I said on two similar occasions this afternoon, that that kind of information ought to be sought in another way. It would be grossly and manifestly unfair to permit the hon. member to have a second run at the same question, unless I would be prepared to do this for his colleagues as well.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

MAIN ESTIMATES, 1977-78

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE
TREASURY BOARD

A message from His Excellency the Governor General transmitting estimates for the financial year ending March 31, 1978, was presented by the Hon. Robert K. Andras (President of the Treasury Board) and read by Mr. Speaker to the House.