

Oral Questions

Miss Carney: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, they are not interested in my answer.

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Speaker, it is true that Tory times are tough times for some.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR EXPENDITURES

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the Prime Minister's Director of Communications communicates well with the Prime Minister's lifestyle.

My supplementary question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Who is looking after the interests of the public purse? Who is representing the taxpayers in making sure that real excessive, unnecessary expenditures are being curtailed by the Government?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Benjamin: Give us some food to process.

An Hon. Member: Take away Broadbent's chauffeur.

Mr. Broadbent: You are getting about as low as you can get.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Churchill has put a question, and I would ask Hon. Members to permit the Hon. Minister to respond.

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I can further add, in response to the Hon. Member's question, that the furnishings which were purchased for the house of course are the property of the Canadian Government and will be used by Mr. Phillips' successor.

* * *

FORESTRY

DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL FORESTRY STRATEGY

Mr. John A. MacDougall (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Forestry. Over the past two years the Minister has had extensive consultations with all sectors of the forest industry, the aim being to develop a national forestry strategy.

I wonder whether the Minister could inform the House what is the status of this very important issue.

Hon. Gerald S. Merrithew (Minister of State (Forestry and Mines)): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is absolutely right. The forest sector, including industry, provinces, labour, and academia, asked for a long time to have a national forest strategy developed.

They did not want one which was foisted on them by the federal Government as was done in 1981. They wanted to develop it from the grass roots up.

For that very reason the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers undertook to do that. It held forestry forums on widely represented sectors of the forest industry. Also, this was widely discussed in the National Forest Congress, the largest forestry congress in the history of Canada.

The task force which evolved from that has been working diligently and hopefully will be dealing with that in a major meeting in the Maritimes in July and perhaps having it ratified by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers in September.

Hopefully we will have a new national forest policy developed from the grass roots up by the fall.

* * *

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

EXPENDITURES UNDERTAKEN FOR FORMER WASHINGTON EMBASSY OFFICIAL

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. Yesterday's episode in the lifestyle of "The Rich and Famous" saw Fast Freddy and his \$35,000 kitchen in his office. In today's episode we have Loosey Brucey trying to spend taxpayers' money to the tune of \$80,000 to fix up a house for him.

A few minutes ago the Minister responsible said that these expenditures were consistent with that kind of position. How does the Deputy Prime Minister explain the fact that the previous appointee was not afforded such luxuries? Why was it that the house which was appropriate for Mr. Gossage was inappropriate for Mr. Phillips?

● (1150)

Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, the expenditures were made in accordance with Treasury Board guidelines and in keeping with the status of the office.

Mr. Boudria: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, only the Prime Minister can top this kind of extravagance.

[Translation]

REQUEST FOR HALT TO CERTAIN EXPENDITURES

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. Now that we have another episode in the Conservative Party's ongoing spending spree, is the Deputy Prime Minister prepared to make a commitment to the House today that this kind of profligate spending is going to stop? We are hearing new examples every day. Isn't the Deputy Prime Minister himself fed up with this orgy of spending by his colleagues and the Prime Minister's cronies?

[English]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the Hon.