

Oral Questions

mentioned by the hon. member. The Post Office Department is, of course, subject to the restraints with regard to person-years as are all other federal departments. When the Post Office is no longer a department but becomes a corporation, it will then surely enjoy a greater freedom.

[English]

Mr. McDermid: Madam Speaker, the minister will pardon me if I am a little cynical. The last time we had new mail carriers in our community was the day the election was announced in 1979. If it takes an election to get mail delivery to these new subdivisions, will the Postmaster General urge the Prime Minister to call an election so we can get some mail delivery in our communities?

[Translation]

Mr. Ouellet: Madam Speaker, I think that service in those areas will be provided long before the next election.

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[English]

FOREIGN INVESTMENT REVIEW AGENCY**ROCKWELL CORPORATION OPERATIONS**

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, I have a question I would have asked the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce but, I think in another context, I will direct it to the Minister of Finance.

I am sure the Minister of Finance is familiar with the Rockwell Corporation. This is the same corporation that has closed down five plants in the last five years and cut the work force in two others from approximately 1,500 to 260. Just last week it was announced by FIRA that it had been given approval to take over Wescom of Canada in Georgetown. I wonder whether the minister might explain what significant benefit we can expect from Rockwell this time?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, that is a question I would rather hand over to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

Mr. Deans: I do not blame the minister, Madam Speaker. I would rather hand it over to him as well were I the minister. However, I am under the impression that the cabinet gives ultimate approval. Therefore that means, in my mind, that the cabinet includes all the ministers. I wonder if I might ask this minister whether this matter was in fact brought to the cabinet, whether Rockwell's performance in Canada was considered, and what in heaven's name is the use of FIRA if it is going to approve this kind of takeover by a company which has abused Canada and the people who work here.

Mr. MacEachen: Madam Speaker, the hon. member is right. Usually these applications are brought forward by the minister and considered at least in cabinet committee. There are a fair number of applications considered and it would be quite impossible for any minister to recall the details of every

case. I can assure the hon. member that either the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce or myself will provide him with the information which led to the conclusion. He may disagree with the conclusion, but at least I will assure him of the information.

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THE PERFORMING ARTS**APPLICATION FOR FUNDS TO AID ST. LAWRENCE CENTRE,
TORONTO**

Mr. John Bosley (Don Valley West): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State and Minister of Communications, but in his absence I will direct it to his parliamentary secretary. The parliamentary secretary will know that some time ago the St. Lawrence Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto made an application to the special initiatives program for some funds to renovate and upgrade the theatre. This is a program which has already received the support and approval of the provincial and municipal governments, yet as far as we can tell to this date the federal department has yet even to acknowledge the letter of application. Could I have an undertaking from the parliamentary secretary that he will look into the matter and, beyond that if possible, will he provide some information as to when the theatre may expect both an answer to its letter and the determination of approval or refusal of its request, and I would prefer, of course, approval?

Mr. Peter Stollery (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State and Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, first of all I would like to point out to the hon. member that it is becoming a bit of a problem. The provincial governments, particularly Ontario, under the agreement in respect of Loto Canada, have said they would cover some of these expenses in the arts community. But then, after receiving the money from Loto Canada, they go back and tell these people who need the money that they should go back to the federal government for the money which the federal government has already given to the provincial governments. Having said that, I would assure the hon. member that the situation is being looked into and there will be an answer shortly.

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METRIC CONVERSION**MINISTER'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO SMALL BUSINESS**

Mr. Bill Domm (Peterborough): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the Minister of State for Small Businesses and Tourism. The subject to which I want to refer affects the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. We would like someone to speak for small business on the issue of the implementation of metric in the retail food sector at a time