

*Oral Questions*

Columbia are very fragile? Why is the Government about to give approval to this export of power? Why not put the interests of Canadians ahead of the interests of our American neighbours for once?

[Translation]

**Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, the Government will, of course, consider both the interests of Canadians and the interests of B.C. Hydro. In 1980, the utility requested permission for all units to be able to export energy. At the time, the Government refused to allow exports from the area where the Burrard thermal plant is located, since the plant had failed to obtain existing pollution control permits. Since then, the province authorized and granted the pollution control permits, and B.C. Hydro is now making a new submission to the National Energy Board, which has yet to reach a decision, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT NOT APPROVE APPLICATION

**Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver—Kingsway):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister will be aware that British Columbia does not have the highest requirements in terms of the environment, to put it mildly. Why does the Minister not tell B.C. Hydro that the federal Government will not approve this application? Otherwise, we will have to tell the old people in Fraser Valley that they will have to stay indoors this summer because of the pollution levels that will be caused in order to run American air conditioners in California. Stop accommodating the interests of the Americans and stand up for Canadians.

[Translation]

**Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, Parliament has adopted certain procedures, and I think it is the responsibility of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to abide by them. The request is now before the National Energy Board, and it is up to the Board to deal with the matter and make recommendations to the Minister, and then, and only then, will I make a decision, bearing in mind the interests of all concerned.

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[English]

#### ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

WATER—SCIENCE COUNCIL OF CANADA REPORT

**Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of the Environment my question is directed to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The Science Council of Canada once again brought to the attention of the

public the Government's inability to deal with emerging water issues.

The Council says in the report released yesterday that Canadians must be made to realize that their supply of safe, clean water is seriously threatened and that governments have to recognize the threat and start spending more on water related issues.

Will the Minister recognize the error of his Government in cutting personnel and water related programs since 1984, and move immediately to reinstate such programs so as to deal with the emerging problems described in the Science Council report?

**Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of State (Science and Technology)):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Hon. Member will allow me to answer the question. We have every reason to be rather pleased with the report because it underscores and endorses the initiatives that have been taken by the Minister of the Environment and the Government. These initiatives are reflected in the federal water policy which was announced last fall.

The Minister is absent today because he is at McMaster University announcing a very exciting program which includes significant federal spending precisely in this area.

#### DEPARTMENTAL FUNDING AND STAFFING

**Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport):** Mr. Speaker, the initiatives to which the Minister is referring are not worth the paper they are written on unless there are people and programs and funds to implement them.

Does the Minister realize that in Environment Canada alone, over the last three or four years, some \$70 million has been lost to inflation and over 300 scientists and technicians have been displaced because of the Government's fiscal policy?

**Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of State (Science and Technology)):** Mr. Speaker, any objective observer comparing the record of the Minister of the Environment of the present Government with the Minister of the Environment of the former Government would obviously come to the conclusion that things are on track.

I told the Hon. Member that the Minister of the Environment is at McMaster University today to announce the establishment, together with the private sector and the university, of an industrial chair for industrial waste water treatment.

There are numerous initiatives like that, all of which are reflected in the Freshwater Act. If the Hon. Member would take the trouble to read it, I am sure he would be as excited as the rest of us with the prospects for the future.