

Oral Questions

• (1450)

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, the taxpayers have had quite enough of your mismanagement, thank you very much.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mrs. Finestone: Telecommunications and broadcasting ought to be players in this government's prosperity agenda. Landmark telecommunications decisions and key broadcast hearings are being delayed by this government's ongoing poor management. Business opportunities are being missed because this government has left over half the seats or almost half the seats at the CRTC empty.

Could the minister please tell us what is holding up these nominations while the work plans of these major institutions of this country are being put on hold?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, the government is continuing to make nominations to all government boards and commissions, certainly to the CRTC and other bodies as well.

When the hon. member raises the importance of for example the broadcasting industry in Canada, she should be aware of the fact that on Monday and Tuesday of next week in Montreal I will be convening the first ever summit on television broadcasting in Canada. I will be working together with representatives of all sides of the industry, with the CRTC, with the public broadcasters and others in order to do what we can to ensure the health of the Canadian broadcasting industry.

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CANADA POST

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister.

Canada Post is saying that in spite of the announced investigation of the Minister of National Revenue yesterday it will continue its policy to encourage employees to work overtime using someone else's name and social insurance number against the laws of Canada.

I ask the minister: When the government will put its foot down and tell Canada Post to obey the law like everyone else?

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I have looked into this thing in detail. The investigation, as the hon. member knows, continues both by Revenue Canada and Canada Post in co-ordination and co-operation.

However, I would like to take this opportunity to correct the hon. member's alleged misinformation on this matter because Canada Post—

An hon. member: Alleged misinformation?

Mr. Jelinek: English is not my mother tongue, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Jelinek: Canada Post policy is to contract out only to contractors or owner-drivers and not their employees. That is the policy of Canada Post. Therefore when there are statements by Canada Post officials saying that there will be no change in policy, it is because the policy does not condone the type of things that the hon. member is representing in the House today.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, the minister has missed the whole point. Canada Post officials have been instructing their employees to do this.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, will the minister take action today, under section 49 of the Financial Administration Act or before the courts, to obtain an injunction and force the Canada Post Corporation to obey the law? At this very moment, Canada Post employees are being told to use someone else's social insurance number, and that is illegal.

[*English*]

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is exaggerating. After having talked to Don Lander this morning, I can assure this House and Canadians that Canada Post is not advising its employees in the way the hon. member is suggesting, not at all.

It does not condone that practice. It is co-operating. He is pointing to *The Toronto Star*, Mr. Speaker. I am not quite sure what that means. I am telling him the facts. The facts as presented by the hon. member on this floor today are wrong, wrong, wrong.