

Privilege

Could the government tell us why it is deliberately going out of its way to help Canada's foreign competitors by putting down and suppressing our Canadian businesses and our Canadian workers?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, in that question is a *mélange* of inaccuracies.

First, science and technology spending has gone up since the government has taken power at a greater proportion of program spending than existed under the previous Liberal government.

Second, the spending on the National Research Council is going up this year over last year.

Third, in terms of foreign investment to which the hon. member is probably referring, Investment Canada will be taking a look at the Consumers Gas issue if that is what he is thinking about. I hope the Ontario Energy Board will make its recommendations on that matter, as well as the Quebec energy authorities.

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Mr. Speaker, let us look again at the score card of Investment Canada: 789 approvals, zero disapprovals. That is Investment Canada for you.

Some hon. members: Shame.

Mr. Peterson: The problem is that Canada continues to have the highest level of foreign control over our economy of any country in the world and this level, under this government, continues to go up.

How much of Canada must be sold off to foreigners before the government will come to its senses?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, I was in New York two days ago. I opened *Business Week* magazine to see a supplement in it from the Premier of Ontario calling for more foreign investment in the province of Ontario and calling for Americans to take an interest in the new free trade context.

What we have today is a lower unemployment rate than we had last month. It has just gone down one-tenth of 1 per cent. Investment interest within Canada and outside Canada is strong because of the strength of our economy.

PRIVILEGE

TABLING OF REPORTS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, one of the principles of parliamentary democracy is the requirement that ministers of the Crown are responsible to the House. Indeed, it is a well-known principle that ministers must maintain the confidence of this House at all times. Another part of it is that ministers have an obligation to report to Parliament. Various Crown corporations share a similar responsibility.

The House maintains records of annual reports, budgets, capital budget presentations and other documents required to be presented in the House from time to time by Crown corporations and government departments. When one looks at the list of those reports that are supposed to be tabled in the House, one can see what is missing. I had the opportunity to examine the records and noticed there is a report that is late and has not been filed. I am getting conflicting information on it.

I raise this matter because I believe the failure of the government to live up to its responsibilities and table these reports in a timely manner constitutes a contempt of the House. The requirements for the tabling of these reports are contained in the Statutes of Canada. They are not just resolutions of this House which alone would be very effective; they are in the law.

The Minister of Supply and Services is wagging his head. I do not know if he agrees or disagrees. I hope he does agree. I hope he listens because he may have some responsibility for some of these late filings.

I am not going to read the list but, according to my calculations, for the period of 1988-89, 73 Crown corporation reports ranging from corporate plan summaries to capital budget summaries and so on were tabled late in the House.

Those corporations are responsible to the House through the ministers who sit opposite and they ignore this problem. It floats around and these things are not done. Most were only one to four days late, but many were up to eight months late.

The point I am making in respect of those items is that those ministers who sit in the House have a responsibility, a very solemn responsibility. They have taken an oath of office to serve their Queen and do their job. Serving their Queen involves reporting for Her Majesty's Crown