

*Oral Questions*

to return to cabinet with a request for a mandate for the corporation, and to assist the government in bringing a resolution to some unhappy claimants, for example, people who were originally expropriated in that area. The local communities feel that a long-range plan is needed to revitalize the area and would like assistance in the deregulation of the ownership of some of the outside or peripheral lands.

*[Translation]*

INQUIRY CONCERNING DETAILS OF SALE OF 80,000 ACRES OF LAND

**Mr. Bill Clarke (Vancouver Quadra):** Madam Speaker, this file has now been gathering dust for twelve years. Does this corporation intend to take more time still to review once again how to proceed with the sale of the 80,000 acres of land which were needlessly expropriated?

*[English]*

**Hon. Paul J. Cosgrove (Minister of Public Works):** On the contrary, Madam Speaker, the corporation has not been in place for one year. The first task given to the corporation was to return to the government, assist in setting up the mandate for such a corporation, and to recommend to government the procedures that corporation should follow—for example, how would the local community, namely the municipal officials, the provincial government and many private individuals, be engaged? What process would be followed? My understanding is that the new chairman and the officials of the corporation have met with a number of local interested citizens. I further understand that they are in the process of coming forward to government with a design. I expect it will be made available to the government before the end of the summer.

\* \* \*

**REGULATORY REFORM**

## INVOLVEMENT OF PARLIAMENT

**Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East):** Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the President of the Treasury Board. On Friday last the Prime Minister announced that the President of the Treasury Board would be the co-ordinator for regulatory reform within the cabinet touching on the recommendations of the report of the Economic Council of Canada. The minister will know that the Economic Council of Canada in its report on the effect and cost of regulation on the consumer touched on three or four departments, including transport, fisheries, and agriculture. Given the importance of that report, its impact on consumers, and the savings that could be effected by consumers, does the minister on behalf of the government intend to involve Parliament in this regulatory reform and either set up a committee on regulatory reform, or refer the report of the Economic Council of Canada to a standing committee of this House?

● (1420)

**Hon. Donald J. Johnston (President of the Treasury Board):** Madam Speaker, first let me point out that the office of the co-ordinator of regulatory reform has been in existence for some time. The mandate for co-ordinating regulatory reform across the government is a mandate which I received shortly after my appointment to my present post as President of the Treasury Board. Clearly we have important work to do in this entire area. We have been waiting with great anticipation the tabling of this report by the Economic Council of Canada. I might point out at the same time that we have been moving very rapidly in the area of regulatory reform.

When the hon. member speaks about the involvement of Parliament, I would draw to his attention that we already have the report of a task force which was very well received that dealt primarily with process. In the area of process, the report of the Economic Council also, as you and the House know, Madam Speaker, has moved forward and suggested numerous improvements that can be made, all of which I might say for the most part are already under way. I am frankly delighted with the progress we are making and I can assure hon. members that the report of the Economic Council will receive full consideration by the government.

## REQUEST FOR REFERRAL OF ECONOMIC COUNCIL REPORT TO PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

**Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East):** Madam Speaker, the minister may be very well satisfied with the progress they are making in government on regulatory reform. Parliament has no way of knowing what goes on in cabinet, and only the government can refer a report to a committee. Therefore I would repeat to the minister, given the fact that this report of the Economic Council of Canada, commissioned by the government, touches on three or four departments, including transport and fisheries, and given the fact that this is the only way Parliament can have access to members of the Economic Council of Canada who frame these recommendations, will the minister, on behalf of the government, refer that report to a standing or special committee of the House on regulatory reform so members of this House will at least have the chance of determining whether or not any progress is being made within the cabinet on regulatory reform?

**Hon. Donald J. Johnston (President of the Treasury Board):** Madam Speaker, clearly the involvement of Parliament in this whole area of regulatory reform is of utmost importance, and I will certainly pay great attention to the suggestion of the hon. member.