

Oral Questions

GOVERNMENT MEASURES

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, it is a farce that that Minister should have answered that question since he is personally responsible for some of those tens of millions of dollars of cuts in eastern Ontario.

As a complement to an industrial and tourism incentive program for eastern Ontario, will the Government start by dropping its self-imposed 15 per cent export tax on softwood lumber, which is very important to this region? Will the Government cease the cuts in the Public Service of Canada? Will the Government restore research and development funding to the Chalk River laboratories and to the National Research Council of Canada which has been devastated and where we have lost several hundreds of jobs? Will the Government bring in an agricultural and forestry program in that regional development for eastern Ontario? How about doing something for a change other than just cutting?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of State (Science and Technology)): Mr. Speaker, obviously you have been very generous with the Member, giving him an opportunity to point out all the strengths that there are in eastern Ontario.

Indeed, to be fair, we announced a couple of months ago a \$1.3 billion boost to research and development, particularly in the area of industrial incentives, to permit the various regions of the country to build upon their strengths, to allow the traditional industries to revitalize themselves—forestry, agriculture, fisheries, and mining—while at the same time lessening the dependence of Canadians on some of these traditional industries and working toward a more future oriented industrial sector. All of these things are done within a framework of a new national policy on science and technology, and a new industrial strategy from which all regions of the country will benefit, particularly the region which the Hon. Member represents.

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CANADA POST CORPORATION

REVIEW BOARD PRESIDENT—REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE REFERRAL

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Post Office. When the Minister appointed Allan Marchment as the watchdog over postal rates he did it with great fanfare. Now the Government is trying to hide this new appointee.

Why has the Government not referred the appointment of the president of a review board to the parliamentary committee? Is the Government afraid that an examination of his

qualifications as a watchdog over the Post Office will not stand up? Will the Minister make sure that his Government now refers the appointment of Allan Marchment to the parliamentary committee so that his qualifications for this job can be examined?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I thought the Hon. Member was at the committee meeting at which I appeared to talk about the board and the fact that Allan Marchment had agreed to serve as chairman.

Sally Hall, past President of the Consumers Association of Canada, agreed to be one of the members.

A former Member of the National Energy Board, Mr. Senneville, agreed to serve as a third member.

If the Hon. Member would like to talk to these outstanding Canadians about their qualifications for serving the public of Canada in this fashion, why does he not suggest it to the chairman of the committee and send the invitation?

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, obviously the Minister is not aware of the parliamentary procedure whereby such appointments are referred to a parliamentary committee on an automatic basis. The committee took the unusual action of writing a letter to the Deputy Prime Minister asking for this appointment to be referred to the committee because it has not been referred up until now.

Why is the Government trying to hide Allan Marchment? Refer him to the committee.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I repeat that I thought the Hon. Member was there—I am sure he was—when I appeared before the committee and talked about Allan Marchment's appointment. If that is hiding Allan Marchment, it is a peculiar definition of hiding. I do not know why the Hon. Member is getting into such a lather. If he would simply send a letter to me requesting such a—

Mr. Keeper: The letter is gone.

• (1500)

Mr. Andre: He just indicated that he sent a letter to the Deputy Prime Minister. Since it is not a Governor General appointment, but an appointment by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, perhaps he should address the request to the appropriate person. I have already answered orally that I would certainly consider such a request.