

originally delighted in the kinds of policies imposed by the Reagan administration in that country.

We will be continuing our effort to help the forest industry in British Columbia to find additional markets quite apart from the United States, through programs such as the Co-operative Overseas Marketing Development Program which we run jointly with the British Columbia Forest Products Council and the British Columbia provincial government. Just a few months ago we signed an agreement to increase our funding. The result of that program has been that, over less than ten years, there has been an increase in the export of British Columbia forest products to markets other than the United States, from some \$200 million to close to \$1 billion. I think this is an important record of co-operative effort by the industry, the federal government, and the province. I certainly intend to see that these efforts are continued.

**Mr. Oberle:** Madam Speaker, the minister knows full well that this is not only a problem which is serious in British Columbia. It is more serious there because 60 per cent of its total economy is based upon the forest industry, but it is a problem throughout the country. This most important industry is facing a very serious crisis. Regardless of what the minister says, they are not doing anything about it.

#### STRENGTH OF CANADIAN FOREST SERVICE

**Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River):** Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the minister responsible for forestry. One problem the industry is facing of course is the incredible accelerating depletion of the resource base. The minister is fully aware of that. The only thing which depletes faster than the trees in the country is the number of the minister's officials in his department.

**An hon. Member:** And the Western Development Fund.

**Mr. Oberle:** It went from 2,400 ten years ago to merely 1,100 now. Recently on television the minister described this situation as a crisis to which the government must address itself. What is he doing within his department? We know that he does not have any new money in the budget. What is he doing within his department to beef up the Canadian Forest Service to ensure that there is a stable resource base, not only for the industry but to avert very serious consequences in terms of the environment and the ecology? As our trees deplete, so does our fresh water and fresh air. What is the minister doing within his department to take hold of the situation and do something about it?

**Hon. John Roberts (Minister of State for Science and Technology and Minister of the Environment):** Madam Speaker, as the hon. member knows, within the last year we have enhanced the standing of the forestry service. We appointed Mr. Les Reed as assistant deputy minister, which I think is a very positive step forward; indeed it is one for which the hon. member commended me. I believe the situation, as he correctly described me as saying, is one of crisis in the forest

#### Oral Questions

industry in relation to reforestation. This is a matter that is at the heart of the discussion paper I released at the end of September, which I hope hon. members have seen. It was the heart of our discussions with the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers.

I hope to be making announcements within the next two or three months about various aspects of our own responsibilities, particularly in relation to support of the training of highly skilled manpower, in terms of the improvement of our research effort, and other areas in which the federal government will be taking positive action of its own.

As I believe I explained to the hon. member in committee the other day, we have begun urgent consultation with each province to see how the provincial government and the federal government in each province can act together to create the context which will lead to the kind of reforestation which the hon. member and I would both like to see take place in Canada.

\* \* \*

#### FITNESS AND AMATEUR SPORT

##### SUPPORT FOR PROGRAMS SPONSORED BY CANADIAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

**Mr. Joe Reid (St. Catharines):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the minister responsible for fitness and amateur sport. The minister knows that the Canadian Council of the Blind has for years encouraged, co-ordinated and developed a program of recreational curling and bowling for those people afflicted with a sight disability. In this year of the handicapped, how does the minister justify the discontinuance of the use of such moneys to aid the council in its activities?

**Hon. Gerald Regan (Secretary of State):** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. I assure him that in this year of the disabled the department, within its means, had a number of special allocation programs. Every effort was made to utilize those dollars as equitably as possible for the various events organized for people afflicted with different types of disabilities. I take the hon. member's particular question as notice and will provide him with the details on the events into which he inquired.

##### HOSTING OF GREY CUP RECEPTION IN MONTREAL

**Mr. Joe Reid (St. Catharines):** Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same minister. I understand from this group of people that the funding has been discontinued, as has the funding of Canadian gold medallist handicapped people for their participation in international sport. This being so, in this year of government restraint how does the minister justify the finding of moneys for the first time to host a reception in Montreal at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, promoted and developed by an American public relations group, giving the usual Grey Cup bash a government spending flavour, and staging not one but two Grey Cup shows