

record of the Government in the area of Indian affairs has been outstanding. The Minister in charge today, the Member for Kindersley—Lloydminster, and the former Minister, the Member for Rosedale, have both done an outstanding job on behalf of the Indian people of Canada. I am sure that the Hon. Member recognizes that these are very difficult and complex issues. Nonetheless, the Government is working very actively in this particular area, as well as other areas that affect the Indian people. I am sure that a more comprehensive response could be provided by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development when he returns to the House.

● (1500)

POLICY INQUIRY

Mr. John Parry (Kenora—Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, since the Standing Orders do not allow for commercial breaks, and since the problem is that this responsibility is always delegated by the Government to the particular Minister, will the Deputy Prime Minister give some commitment from the Government to the introduction of a comprehensive claims policy which will improve on the previous abysmal record in the settlement of these claims?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member knows of the Cooligan report on comprehensive land claims. He has been told before by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development about the Government's response to the Cooligan report and the comprehensive approach that the Government is taking. This is also in preparation for the constitutional conference in May, 1987. I think the Hon. Member should co-operate very closely with the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, who has focused these issues and directed them toward that meeting.

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CANADA POST CORPORATION

ALLEGED INTERCEPTION AND OPENING OF MAIL

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for the Post Office. Has he investigated the comments of the President of the Manitoba Institute of Chartered Accountants who said that local chartered accountant firms routinely intercept and open mail without required court authorizations? How widespread is this practice and how many Canadians have had their privacy violated without a court order?

[Translation]

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I have just been informed of this situation. I shall soon have an opportunity to speak to the president of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and I shall report to my colleague later.

Privilege—Ms. Coppins

[English]

REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, the incident was reported in the *Free Press* on November 14. I think the Minister had enough time to investigate. I hope he will carry out a thorough investigation, and is he now committing himself to that thorough investigation so that this will not be repeated?

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I am not saying that the corporation is not investigating. I am saying that I am not aware of the progress of the investigation. As soon as the investigation is completed I will inform the Hon. Member of its conclusions.

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PRIVILEGE

COMMITTEE EXAMINATION OF ORDER IN COUNCIL APPOINTEES

Ms. Sheila Coppins (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I seek your guidance under the new Standing Orders. According to Standing Orders 104(1) and 104(2), Parliament has empowered committees with the responsibility to examine appointees within a specific period of time, which is 30 sitting days, pursuant to Standing Order 103.

In an organizational meeting approximately a week ago, the Standing Committee on Human Rights decided to invite some 16 of the 28 recently appointed members to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal for questioning pursuant to Standing Order 104. That particular agenda was agreed to by the subcommittee, which included a majority of members of the Conservative Party as well as representatives from each Opposition Party.

When the proposition was put to the committee, it was decided at a meeting that each Member of Parliament would have the opportunity to invite only one person to appear before the Committee. Therefore, instead of reviewing the 16 appointees which was originally decided by the subcommittee, we are now talking about reviewing two appointees, one nominee from the Liberal Party, one nominee from the NDP and the balance from the Conservative Party.

If the Parliament of Canada was truly sincere about reform of the committee process, to permit Members to review all Order in Council appointments, I submit that the action of the majority Conservative Members on the Human Rights Committee was a perversion of the attempt to democratize the process and allow Order in Council appointments to be improved—

Mr. Hnatyshyn: You cast reflections on people. I would not do that to you.