

In view of these circumstances, as the Minister is well aware of the main purpose of the Canada Post Corporation, which is to provide the best service possible, I would like to ask him, first, whether he was serious when he said that the Corporation would reassess its plans, and second whether he has received any representations with regard to this brand of competition which, at least in our opinion, cannot but shock the private sector?

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, the President of the Corporation has assured me that he would reconsider these plans because of the representations he has received. The Canada Post Corporation has signed a contract with one of its customers to be able to serve it better.

What the Canada Post Corporation did was to carry out a pilot project in about ten Canadian municipalities for a limited period of time to see how it could, first, better serve the public, second, provide a better service to one of its regular users, and third, determine whether such an operation could increase its profits.

However, the President has assured me that, in the light of the representations he has received, he is willing to reconsider this plan and take whatever action is necessary.

REQUEST FOR MINISTER TO MAKE A COMMITMENT

Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, the Minister has just admitted that the Canada Post Corporation is anxious to provide better services to one of its users when everyone is well aware that it has, in fact, millions of users.

In view of the circumstances, since the Minister is aware of the main purpose of the Canada Post Corporation and also of the objections such action will create as the Minister himself has said in the House that Opposition Members have already made representations to him, concerning this unacceptable project of the Canada Post Corporation, I simply want to ask the Minister whether he will undertake on behalf of this House to recommend to the Corporation that it confine itself to its primary job and forget about competing with the private sector in the marketplace.

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, what the Hon. Member seems to be forgetting is that the thousands of Canadians who use the Canada Post Corporation to order merchandise are all customers of the Corporation and users of the postal service.

The Hon. Member is therefore quite wrong when he suggests that this new service provided by the Canada Post Corporation is offered to just one customer. In co-operation with a private business, the Corporation offers this service to the thousands of Canadians who will want to use it.

Petitions

However, quite apart from this question, I can assure the Hon. Member that the other issue he has raised as to whether the Corporation is entering into unfair competition with small businesses by extending its services is something that the President of the Corporation has accepted to reconsider, and I expect a report from him in the very near future.

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● (1500)

[English]

PENITENTIARIES

KINGSTON AREA INSTITUTIONS—REQUEST THAT TASK FORCE MAKE REPORT PUBLIC

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have a brief question which is addressed to the Solicitor General and is supplementary to questions which were posed to him earlier today. As the Minister will be aware, there has been another murder of an inmate and a stabbing of two guards in the Millhaven penitentiary in recent days. This is causing great concern within the community and great concern to people who work in the penitentiary, as well as to the inmates.

Could the Minister give the House his assurance that the investigation team he has set up under the leadership of Dr. Vantour will report publicly to Members of the House and to the Commissioner of Penitentiaries on its findings regarding the escalating violence in the penitentiaries in the Kingston area?

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member has reminded the House that I have indeed established a task force and asked it to examine the situation in Kingston area institutions relating to the violence which has occurred lately, including the tragic incident to which the Hon. Member referred. That task force is composed of three officials, and Mr. Vantour is the chairman. It includes, as well, one non-official, a former RCMP investigator, who I expect will make a very good contribution. I undertake that the report of the committee will be made public and it will be made public as soon as I receive it.

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PETITION

TABLING OF REPORTS OF CLERK OF PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have the honour to inform the House that the petition presented by the Hon. Member for Parry Sound-Muskoka (Mr. Darling) on Tuesday, March 20, 1984, meets the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form. The petition presented by the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) on Tuesday, March 20, 1984, does not meet the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.