

directly responsible for the stamp program—that does not go to the Canada Post Corporation—will he confirm or deny that instructions have been given to the planning department that the Queen's portrait is definitely to be left off all 1983 stamps?

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, I think this is speculation in the mind of the hon. member because no such instruction has ever been given. The program is decided in the very last month of the year for the following year. So obviously no plan whatsoever has been made for 1983. I am very surprised that the hon. member is speaking of the Queen's portrait not appearing on stamps in 1983. I think somebody, somewhere, is really trying to create a problem that does not exist. A lot of members of the opposition have accused the Prime Minister of being anti-monarchist. I think he showed his loyalty to the Queen clearly last week. I hope the hon. member will do the same.

Mr. Bradley: Madam Speaker, that speculation comes directly from the minister's design department for the stamp program. Since the minister did not in fact confirm or deny it, I would assume that that is a confirmation that the instruction did go out.

REQUEST THAT SENIOR CITIZENS ENJOY REDUCED POSTAL RATES

Mr. Bud Bradley (Haldimand-Norfolk): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is also for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. The minister will know from his mail that senior citizens and handicapped persons in Canada rely almost totally on the mail to communicate with their friends and loved ones. He will also know that an increase in postal rates of the magnitude proposed by the government will be tremendously detrimental to people on fixed incomes. Will the minister consider some form of assistance for senior citizens and handicapped persons, possibly along the lines of a special stamp, at say, 50 per cent of the first-class rate?

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member misunderstood my earlier reply. I denied outright that my department's postage design division had been given orders not to publish stamps with the portrait of the Queen in 1983. I denied this allegation and if the opposition member wants to be reassured and if he is interested, I can assure him that I have given no order for either 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986 or 1987.

Concerning the possibility of assistance to the handicapped, I am sure that all members on both sides of this House sympathize with the problems these people may have. However, I do not feel that the new Canada Post Corporation should get involved in this kind of assistance program. Within the Canadian government and also at other levels of government, there are programs aimed at providing assistance to those who require it, and I do not think the Canada Post Corporation should be used for this purpose.

[English]

Oral Questions

FINANCE

TAXATION OF VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. Walter McLean (Waterloo): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State. The minister will recall that earlier this year the former Secretary of State indicated that the National Voluntary Organizations' "give and take" tax proposals would be presented to cabinet. Would the minister tell the House whether he has persuaded the government to adopt these proposals?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Secretary of State): Madam Speaker, the question is accurate in relation to the position that was taken by the former Secretary of State. I have assumed his responsibilities and will see to it that cabinet has occasion to examine a particular proposition carefully. At this time my officials are preparing a document to be placed before cabinet for consideration in relation to the "give and take" proposals. I can assure the hon. member that the matter will be processed without unreasonable delay.

REQUEST FOR CUSHIONING OF VOLUNTARY SECTOR FROM INCREASE IN POSTAL RATES

Mr. Walter McLean (Waterloo): Madam Speaker, as I listened to the Secretary of State I did not hear him indicate to the House that, when presenting these proposals, he would encourage their adoption. The voluntary sector, which was encouraged at Consultation 81 earlier in the year to believe that the government was going to act, now finds itself faced with the government acting in only one way, that is, with increased postal rates to effect them adversely.

May I ask the minister whether he will send a signal to the over three million Canadians who support the voluntary agencies with time and money, and will the minister intervene on their behalf to see that the voluntary sector is cushioned from the negative effects of this massive increase in postal rates?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Secretary of State): Madam Speaker, since assuming the portfolio of Secretary of State I have met with representatives of the National Voluntary Organizations. I want to reaffirm the recognition by this government of the vital importance of the contributions made to our society by voluntary organizations in Canada. They make a tremendous contribution. In many ways they are the backbone of our country, and certainly the government is going to continue to be supportive of the propositions they bring forth.

* * *

SHIPBUILDING

QUERY RESPECTING GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox-Powell River): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Is the minister aware that over the next ten years