

*Oral Questions*

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Madam Speaker, I have to admit that he did ask a better question than some coming from his leader.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Andre:** Perhaps the hon. member missed the part in the annual report where it is mentioned that on a quarterly basis Ernst and Young, an independent auditor, audits the on-time delivery of Canada Post mail, including from small town to small town, and the on-time delivery is 98 per cent.

The hon. member is making the same mistake he has made in terms of rural post offices. I said 80 per cent of the people affected approved of it. He said that he does not care, that he was worried about the 20 per cent. He says that he does not care that 99 per cent of the mail arrives on time, he is worried about the 1 per cent. He can worry about that 1 per cent, we are concerned with the 99 per cent.

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**STUDENT AID**

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State.

Given that the public accounts committee, chaired by my colleague from Ottawa—Vanier, has shown the inadequacy of the current Student Assistance Program, that the 3 per cent tax on student loans should be removed as promised by the government, that the cost of living criteria for student allocations have not been adjusted since 1984, that students will be applying for student aid in August under old rules and an inadequate program, why is the government not bringing forth legislation that will correct these problems in the student aid program?

Why is the government not doing what it has promised to do for years now?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Monique Landry (Secretary of State of Canada):** Madam Speaker, I think all members of this House will admit that over the years, the Canada Student Loans Program has done what it was supposed to do, which is to help an increasing number of students finish their education.

In his budget last year, the Minister of Finance announced a complete restructuring of the program in order to focus on two objectives. These were to enhance and increase support for students and thus give them a wider range of opportunities, but always within our budgetary limits. In fact, we are now finalizing the plan. I have had some fairly extensive consultations recently, and I believe that we will soon be able to announce certain improvements.

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface):** Madam Speaker, my supplementary is directed to the same minister. Why will the government not introduce this legislation? I do not understand. Is it afraid how the general public will react to the subsidies it will give the banks to manage the Student Loans Program or is the government afraid of the criteria for bank loans as they will be applied to students? Will it cancel the 3 per cent guarantee fee? Why will the government not act? There seems to be no good reason. This plan has been in the works for years.

**Hon. Monique Landry (Secretary of State of Canada):** Madam Speaker, the bill is being prepared, the requisite approvals have been given, and our negotiations with the banking community concerned how we would share the risk involved in student loans. Negotiations are at an advanced stage, we are very confident they will soon be finalized. I am sure the hon. member will appreciate the additional flexibility in this program, which will help students plan their week-to-week expenses, and also help those students with special needs. The hon. member will get some very good news shortly.

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[*English*]

**CRIME PREVENTION**

**Mrs. Louise Feltham (Wild Rose):** Madam Speaker, two months ago the Minister of Justice held a symposium on community safety and crime prevention. The participants at the symposium called for quick action by the federal government in many areas pertaining to community safety.

I would like to ask the minister what progress he has made in following up on the recommendations made at the symposium.

• (1450)

**Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister of State (Agriculture)):** Madam Speaker, as my hon. colleague knows, the gathering of close to 300 people in Toronto in March