

sailors by having them on an icebreaker going at four knots, and maybe being stuck in the ice and perhaps getting bombed, I think he was crazy, compared to what you can do by being under the ice.

● (1440)

COST OF ACQUISITION

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): This is somewhat perplexing, Mr. Speaker. I took these quotes from a document, a copy of which I have in my hand, which was sent out by the Conservative Member of Parliament for Nanaimo—Alberni, to individuals in his own riding. The document is entitled: "The Schellenberg Report".

The Minister will also know if he read *Maclean's* magazine that the Conservative Member of Parliament for Don Valley East commented on the nuclear submarines and stated: "The cost of these things boggles the mind". In the same article the Conservative Member of Parliament for Duvernay stated: "The problem that I have is to explain the \$8 billion".

Is it not time for the Minister now to admit that not only are the people of Canada becoming disenchanted with this initiative by the Government but his own back-benchers are now starting to inform their own constituents that they too are against this expenditure?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Paul Dick (Associate Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to see how the New Democratic Party likes to propagate misinformation.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Dick: The fact is that the nuclear-powered submarines are a cheaper method of defending this country than what the New Democratic Party has suggested.

Mr. Riis: Better tell that to some of your Members, then.

Mr. Dick: The fact is that the average cost per year is \$300 million, which is less than one-half of one per cent of what the social programs in this country cost on an annual basis.

The fact is that it is less than 3 per cent of the annual budget of the Department of National Defence.

If Hon. Members opposite would deal with facts they might even show that they had some common sense and knowledge, but they do not.

Oral Questions

CANADA POST CORPORATION

SYDNEY, N.S., POST OFFICE

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister responsible for Canada Post I direct my question to the Deputy Prime Minister. On June 17, 1988, in the House the Minister responsible said in response to a question from my colleague from Hamilton East with respect to the closure of post offices in 66 cities in Canada, including Sydney, Nova Scotia: "—post offices will be increased in number, not decreased, not closed."

Yesterday it was confirmed in the House that the post office in Sydney, Nova Scotia, which serves some 22,000 Canadians, would be closed, and some of its operations transferred to the private sector.

I would like to ask the Deputy Prime Minister why the Minister responsible for Canada Post on June 17, 1988, deliberately and wantonly left the impression with this House and those Canadians in those 66 communities, including Sydney, that there would be no closure of their post offices, nor would there be any privatizations of the facilities in those communities.

[Translation]

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, once again, with respect to the Sydney Post Office, those in charge were advised to move. So what Canada Post is doing now is to transfer the existing service to another building.

The Hon. Member is not informed if he asks such a question.

[English]

REQUEST THAT CORPORATION BE DIRECTED NOT TO CLOSE POST OFFICES

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House are very much aware of the distortion and misleading statements coming from the Government concerning Canada Post.

Will the individual responding to the question give a clear and unequivocal undertaking to the House concerning the postal facilities named in those 66 communities, particularly in Sydney, Nova Scotia, that a directive will be given pursuant to the Financial Administration Act to Canada Post that there be no closures, none whatsoever, in those communities, and no privatization of the operations in those communities? Then maybe Canadians might believe.

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely unbelievable to hear such a question. No, there is no closure of post offices. Again, no.