

Oral Questions

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, I shall probably have his speech in advance.

I have a further question for the hon. gentleman. When he is lingering over dessert at that luncheon, would he put to the officials of that organization the proposition whether or not it would be acceptable to them to have a parliamentary task force, or a select committee of this House of Commons, conduct an inquiry under the appropriate auspices with respect to the volunteer sector?

Mr. Fox: Madam Speaker, I think there were a number of proposals which were initiated by our government a few years ago in connection with the National Voluntary Organizations. I know that when the hon. member's party was in power it also had a number of recommendations. These recommendations were not acted upon, in good part because of the successive elections which occurred in this country. We are looking at a whole series of possible initiatives which we would like to take with the NVO, because of the great importance the National Voluntary Organizations play in this country.

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[Translation]

INDUSTRY

INQUIRY RESPECTING FEDERAL AID TO AIRCRAFT
MANUFACTURERS

Mr. Bernard Loiselle (Verchères): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Can the minister inform this House of the terms of the federal assistance for the Dash-8 and the new PT-7 aircraft engine, of the financial implications of this assistance and of the number of jobs to be created?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Madam Speaker, the manufacture of the Pratt & Whitney PT-7 engine will create 1,000 jobs during the life of the program. Federal assistance will be provided through the government's DIP program for the Dash-8 program in the form of guaranteed loans amounting to \$450 million, and this program should create 3,000 jobs. What is most important, subcontractors across the country for both projects will get approximately 40 per cent of the contracts under this program, which is very important for the economy of Canada as a whole.

● (1200)

[English]

POST OFFICE

COMPLAINTS RESPECTING MAIL DELIVERY—REQUEST FOR
COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Hon. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Postmaster General. In view of the fact that complaints about mail delivery service to members of Parliament are increasing, and in view of the fact that a great many of these complaints, which come from all parts of the country, result from delays in delivery during the Christmas period—many of which complaints are still coming in—would the Postmaster General be prepared to make public the records showing the percentage of the next day, second day or third day delivery of first-class mail to the different regions of the country, noting the distinction between those delivery rates in the big urban centres and especially the delivery rate between small communities and large urban centres?

Would the Postmaster General be prepared to give an undertaking to this House that he will have prepared for the public a review of the situation and that the review will be conducted on a continuing basis, so that what may be isolated problems of delivery do not create the image of a complete breakdown of delivery? The public is becoming very angry and would like to know the facts.

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Postmaster General): Madam Speaker, I shall gladly follow up the suggestion of the hon. member. There is within the Post Office Department a performance rating of postal workers, which shows us just how efficient they are. Of course, there are delays now and then in the daily handling of tremendous volumes of mail. But for each letter which may be delivered late, there are 90 or 92 which reach the addressee on time. I think that once these figures are known, people will understand the extent of the problem and will probably be more tolerant when they hear the bad publicity made in certain quarters against postal workers.

[English]

Mr. Fraser: Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary for the minister. Would he be prepared, after suitable discussion, to come before the appropriate committee with officials from both management and, possibly, from the labour unions to answer questions directed specifically at this review as to whether or not the delays and bottlenecks of which the public is complaining arise primarily because there is insufficient personnel to do the work, or because certain parts of the system do not work, perhaps because of inadequate design, because of factors which were not considered, or because there are mechanical or other difficulties? Would the minister be prepared, along with his officials, to discuss with representatives of the opposition before the appropriate committee questions directed toward resolving the difficulty?