

negotiations are difficult. It has to do with work rules and flexibility. I do not think that we should get into that type of debate on the floor of the House of Commons.

It is simply false for anyone to claim that it is an artificial fiscal discipline that this Government has imposed which is the cause of the difficulties in resolving this particular negotiation.

#### SECURITY OF MAIL—ADMISSION OF CASUAL EMPLOYEES TO APARTMENT BUILDINGS

**Mr. George Baker (Gander—Twillingate):** Mr. Speaker, the Government has announced the closure of thousands of rural post offices and the replacement of letter carriers by supermailboxes. Today, we witnessed the dangerous erosion of the security of our mail.

I ask the Minister responsible for the Post Office this. Does he not realize that Canadians do not want hired hands off the street, who have passed no security check because they have refused to sign release forms for the RCMP to do the check, to handle the keys to their apartment buildings, their private mail and their personal cheques?

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, first, in dealing with the Hon. Member's preamble, it is false to claim that thousands of rural post offices have closed. It is false to claim that letter carriers are being replaced by superboxes because not a single letter carrier has been replaced by a superbox anywhere in Canada ever in history, nor will that occur at any time in the future that I can see.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Andre:** As I said in reply to the Hon. Member for Winnipeg North Centre, all proper security checks are being conducted. I can assure the Hon. Member that I will keep in touch with the Post Office to ensure that the security of the mail continues. I will take whatever action is necessary should it be threatened. However, I do not think that it will be.

#### GOVERNMENT POLICY

**Mr. George Baker (Gander—Twillingate):** Mr. Speaker, mail boxes certainly have been replaced with supermailboxes. In these negotiations the Post Office wants to replace the mailman with a supermailman who does not need a lunch hour, who does not need a wage increase, who does not need public transportation, and who can deliver mail twice as fast. It is not a bird, it is not a plane—it is supermailman.

Will the Minister not admit now in the House that the Government, through the postal plan and these negotiations, is deliberately taunting the mail carriers to launch a strike?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, as usual, supermouth has got it wrong.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### Oral Questions

**Mr. Andre:** Perhaps I should remind the Hon. Member that it was in 1974 under the Liberal administration that a freeze was placed on future door-to-door delivery in suburban areas. It so happened that prior to each election in Liberal ridings that freeze tended to thaw a little bit. But that was the policy of the previous Government.

I can assure Hon. Members that, contrary to statements being made by numerous people, the Government absolutely does not want a strike. No one wants a strike. What we want is a settlement. What we want to see is a Post Office that operates efficiently and delivers the mail that is turned over to it for delivery, on time.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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#### TAX REFORM

##### CONSULTANTS' ACCESS TO INFORMATION

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. It has to do with the elite group of tax lawyers and tax accountants who, reports made clear today, are having an opportunity to view the tax documents as late as today. Is the Minister of Finance saying that if this elite group of tax lawyers and tax accountants find problems as they act as a sounding board for his proposals for tax change, he is prepared to make changes between now and his speech tomorrow night?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** No, Mr. Speaker.

##### MINISTER'S POSITION

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Finance then explain to the House and, more appropriately, to the people of Canada why he feels that it is appropriate for 20 elite corporate lawyers and corporate accountants to have an opportunity to view the documents concerning this very critical matter today, hours before the Minister will make it public? Will he explain why they have this privileged information when he has not provided even the same sounding board opportunity to ordinary Canadians, small businessmen and farmers? Why will the Minister not extend the same opportunity if we are going to have this privileged peek in terms of a sounding board? Why on earth would he provide this inside information to this handful of elite people?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I can only think of one instance in the past when there was a change made as recently as the day before a Budget or a White Paper was tabled. That was when a previous Minister of Finance spent \$200 million more of Canadians' money because someone looked over his shoulder at the time he was staging a photo opportunity.