

*Oral Questions*

business, get rid of this farce of supermailboxes, and deliver the mail to Canadians?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)):** Mr. Speaker, what the Leader of the Opposition is referring to is, of course, a serious matter. The Government received the corporate plan from Canada Post. It accepted the plan and a decision was made to refer it to committee. The committee will make its recommendations to Parliament, which will then decide what will be done about the plan.

As for the allegations that the mail is not being delivered in this country, I may remind the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition that the situation today is not any worse than it was in 1984. If anything, there has been a substantial improvement in the quality of delivery and the cost to Canadians.

## HOME DELIVERY OF MAIL—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I have to sympathize with the Minister, because Canada Post's corporate plan was approved by the Prime Minister on October 17 and announced in the House of Commons on November 5. I don't know why the Prime Minister approved the plan, but he did. Again I want to ask the Prime Minister: Will he order the Minister responsible for Canada Post to stop the superbox farce and start delivering the mail to Canadians?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister just explained to the Leader of the Opposition that this complex and important question, which has been a matter of concern to Canadians for twenty years under the Liberal Government, is being dealt with through a corporate plan that has been duly submitted. Hon. Members, in accordance with parliamentary reform, were advised of the plan, and I am sure there will be suggestions for some major changes. The Government will be advised of specific recommendations by Hon. Members for improving postal services, and we intend to listen to what committee members have to say. Unlike the former Government, we believe that backbenchers have a very real role to play in the House. They are not a bunch of nobodies, as former Government seemed to think.

[*English*]

## RIGHT TO MAIL DELIVERY

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, we are all for this new spirit of democracy and parliamentary participation that the Prime Minister expresses. That is all very well. However, the Government announced a plan. Now we have locks that do not stay locked, and keys that will open every box in the supermailbox. Rates are going up and service is deteriorating. Will the Prime Minister take his responsibility and ensure Canadians that one of their fundamental rights, mail delivery service, will be upheld by his

Government? He can go through all the charades he wants, but let us get the mail delivered in this country.

● (1120)

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, in response to my right hon. friend, the plan which was submitted was a corporate plan submitted by the Postal Corporation. It is charged with trying to conduct this service at reasonable cost in the most efficient way considering the expenditure of taxpayers' money. This plan was submitted, as it ought to be, to a parliamentary committee for consideration. Members of Parliament in their new roles under parliamentary reform are sending strong signals—and I suppose there will be a report—to the House of Commons that this plan is unacceptable in some important areas.

First and foremost must be the interest and welfare of Canadian citizens, particularly, for example, in rural areas. There shall be no second-class citizens in this country as long as this Government remains in office, postal services or otherwise.

## CORPORATION'S BUSINESS PLAN—COMMITTEE HEARINGS

**Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Government House Leader. On November 5, as reported at page 1110 of *Hansard*, the Minister responsible for Canada Post, speaking for the Government, said:

Canadians at large as well as Members of this Parliament of all Parties have expressed considerable interest in the development of this plan. I have accordingly felt that Parliament should have a full opportunity to review the rate increase components which the Corporation has assumed in the forecast included in the plan. I am, therefore, proposing to refer this aspect of the plan to an appropriate committee of this House.

Why is the Government agreeing with its members on the parliamentary committee to choke off hearings on this matter without hearing any real testimony on postal rates or any evidence from the public? Why is the Government not carrying out the commitment of the Minister responsible for Canada Post and allowing the public to be heard on this matter? Why is the Government not keeping its promise in this regard?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that the Hon. House Leader of the Liberal Party would suggest that I should interfere with the parliamentary committee process.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Because that in effect is what he is asking me to do. The committee has destiny of its own House. Whatever the committee decides, the committee does. My understanding is that it is now seized with the task of writing a report which I hope will be presented to the House, and which I hope will have some very positive and beneficial suggestions