

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot understand why the Minister speaks of an open mind and attends a conference sponsored by the Fraser Institute.

[*Translation*]

FRASER INSTITUTE'S INVITATION TO  
MINISTER—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Prime Minister. I have here a program of the Fraser Institute Conference which indicates that the Minister responsible for Canada Post will be the guest speaker at a conference to be held shortly on the privatization of the Canadian Postal Service.

In view of the fact that the Fraser Institute is a far right organization which is against daycare, against bilingualism and against social development, does the Prime Minister agree with his Minister's behaviour? Why does he not forbid forthwith his Minister to appear at this Conference?

[*English*]

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and Minister of State for Science and Technology):** Mr. Speaker, that attack on the Fraser Institute is something I will let the Fraser Institute deal with. I find it pretty shocking that a Member of this House should say that it is forbidden to listen to the ideas of a think tank from Vancouver, that it might have some ideas which will contaminate.

Mikhail Gorbachev can listen to new ideas; the Liberal Party apparently cannot.

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

**Mr. Andre:** I would suggest that the Hon. Member should return to Hawkesbury and talk to his constituents. I have an article here from the Hawkesbury paper which says that a bunch of people were asked if mail service is getting better. Marilyn Hill said yes, Gaston Laviolette said yes, Chantal Letourneau said yes, Monique Fournier said yes. The Hon. Member's constituents say yes.

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

\* \* \*

## CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

## CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER'S REPORT

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. Yesterday the Chief Electoral Officer tabled his report

to Parliament. He concluded that the last election was a mess.

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

**Mr. Milliken:** The results indicate that he was right.

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

**Mr. Milliken:** Thousands of Canadians were left off the voters' lists, inexperienced Deputy Returning Officers were appointed at the last minute and millions were spent on third party advertising, making a mockery of the spending controls in the Elections Act. To quote the Chief Electoral Officer, the election system is on the verge of collapse.

After four years of indolence, when will the Government act to deal with the recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, I am not surprised that the Hon. Member would associate himself with the conclusion of the Chief Electoral Officer, albeit in a perhaps somewhat different context.

Quite frankly, what is at issue here is the failure on the part of the Hon. Member's Party and the New Democratic Party to agree on changes that were incorporated in Bill C-79, notwithstanding the fact that I appealed to the two House Leaders and their critics on no less than four occasions and had many, many discussions with them about cleaning up the Elections Act and putting in place those necessary changes which were enshrined in Bill C-79. That in fact was the big issue that denied many citizens of Canada the right to vote in the last election.

## COMPOSITION OF COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister knows perfectly well that we on this side of the House cannot hold up legislation. It takes three to make an agreement in this House and the Deputy Prime Minister had it in his power, as he knows, to agree with the proposals put forward by this Party and by my friends on my left. Having said that, after four years, the country is now looking for some leadership on this issue.

The Deputy Prime Minister knows that in the Speech from the Throne, there was an announcement of a Commission of Inquiry to be appointed to inquire into the Elections Act. Could the Minister tell us when he will discuss with his opposition counterparts the make-up of the committee, its terms of reference and the proposed date for its report?