

this question, and thus maximize the impact of his department's programs by restoring a dialogue and a spirit of co-operation with official language minority groups?

[English]

Hon. Gerald Regan (Secretary of State): Madam Speaker, I acknowledge my appreciation of the genuine interest of the hon. member in the welfare of Franco-Ontarian people. There is no effort on the part of my department to undertake a financial reconstruction of ACFO. Indeed, my department funds a great number of Franco-organizations in the province of Ontario, of which ACFO is by far the largest, the most important, and the most extensive in the work that it undertakes on behalf of Franco-Ontarians.

We have indicated that in the current year we will increase the amount of support which we give in assistance to the cause of Franco-Ontarians. What was under consideration was a redirection of part of the funds to local areas instead of channelling all the funds through the central organization. In view of the objection which has been made to it, I am happy to inform the hon. member that I will be meeting with officials of ACFO on Thursday of this week, in the afternoon, for a further discussion of the matter.

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COMMUNICATIONS

LICENSING OF PAY-TV COMPANIES—JURISDICTIONAL SITUATION

Mr. Mark Rose (Mission-Port Moody): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Communications. Since the Pay-TV announcement of the CRTC last Thursday at least two provincial governments have challenged the authority of the federal government to license this new television service. The Minister of Communications has known for months that, unless the jurisdictional conflict was resolved, the whole development of Pay-TV for Canadians may be in jeopardy. Yet, at past meetings of provincial communications ministers the minister has done nothing to resolve the issue; even worse, he has often refused to have it debated at the table. What does he intend to do at this late date to ensure a quick and orderly resolution of the jurisdictional problem? What specific plans does he have to ensure that the March, 1983, starting date for Pay-TV for Canadians is not jeopardized?

Hon. Francis Fox (Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, I am pleased the hon. member highlighted the important part of the CRTC decision which heralds the introduction of Pay-TV service in Canada. We will see a good part of the profits of that system flowing back to the Canadian program production industry. As far as the federal government is concerned, there is no jurisdictional issue.

Oral Questions

QUERY RESPECTING POSSIBLE JOINT JURISDICTION

Mr. Mark Rose (Mission-Port Moody): Madam Speaker, surely the minister must look upon this as the most recent example of co-operative federalism, such as the wars which have been fought in health care and in post-secondary education. He seems to be only adding to the conflagration, or possible conflagration, by assuming that there will not be court battles over the matter, unless he is joking. I think there will be. Would the minister consider seriously offering joint or shared jurisdiction with the provinces over the hardware or the delivery system, while the content regulations remain federal or under the jurisdiction of the government or the CRTC?

Hon. Francis Fox (Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, since the meeting of last September with communications ministers to which the hon. member referred, there have been a number of meetings at the deputy minister level with all provinces, with the exception of the province of Quebec.

[Translation]

Twice the government of Quebec has been invited to meetings with my deputy minister, and twice the government of Quebec, through its deputy minister, has refused to attend these meetings.

[English]

The whole purpose of these meetings was to see whether we could harmonize the federal interest and the provincial interest. However, with the type of positions which have been taken by many provincial governments to the effect that Pay-TV was a matter of provincial jurisdiction, it is very difficult to harmonize those interests. I, for one, feel that it is rather difficult to interpret Pay-TV as being a matter of local or provincial interest or jurisdiction when we are talking about a national signal being sent up to a satellite sitting 23,000 kilometres above the equator and then distributing the signal across the country. I have some difficulty in understanding how this could be a matter of purely local nature.

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• (1500)

[Translation]

INDUSTRY

FOOTWEAR LAY-OFFS—REQUEST FOR MEASURES TO STIMULATE PRODUCTION

Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Regional Economic Expansion. The minister is aware of the problems facing the footwear industry, and I apologize for bringing the matter up once again. However, considering the fact that the footwear industry may be losing 2,400 jobs by the end of April if no action is taken by the department, and since rumour has it that the Canadian Industrial Renewal Board is to announce special measures