

to pilot projects for a guaranteed annual income and what provinces have expressed interest in participating?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, to date the provinces that have expressed interest and I believe are taking action in mounting projects are Ontario and Manitoba.

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POST OFFICE

REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON DESIRABILITY OF INSURING PARCELS

Mr. Steven E. Paproski (Edmonton Centre): I have a question for the Postmaster General. I wish to welcome him back to the House.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Where were you?

Mr. Paproski: Mr. Speaker, I have been trying to ask this question for the past three weeks and I have not been able to catch the Postmaster General in the House. In view of the large number of parcels lost by theft from post offices and post office boxes across Canada during the last Christmas season, especially parcels addressed to senior citizens, old age pensioners and others,—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Paproski: —for which no compensation was paid because the parcels were not insured, will the minister consider at this time—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member should ask the question because he will again miss the Postmaster General.

Mr. Paproski: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad you support me. Will the minister consider at this time making a statement to the Canadian public impressing upon them the desirability of insuring all valuable parcels so that this will not occur again? Do it! Advertise it!

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Pierre Côté (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, first of all, the hon. member's lecture on attendance is unwarranted as I believe myself to be one of those with the best attendance record here.

I was in the House yesterday and I could also have wondered about his attendance. Last week I attended the Postmasters Conference in Regina and that is perhaps one of the only days I was not in the House.

Regarding the hon. member's question, I did not quite understand it and he might perhaps repeat it.

[English]

Mr. Paproski: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I consider this to be a very important matter. About six or seven months ago I asked the Postmaster General to look into some serious thefts in the Ottawa area in the constituency of the Minister of Justice which he could not look into—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Paproski: I asked him to look into the matter, Sir. On a point of order—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I appreciate that the hon. member may want to reiterate the question he has asked. I am sure that all hon. members, including the minister, appreciate that the matter is serious. Perhaps the minister might be allowed to reply or indicate whether a reply will be given later. There is not much point in raising the matter again on a point of order because we will be running short of time very soon.

[Translation]

Mr. Côté (Longueuil): Mr. Speaker, I do not know yet whether I am being asked a question or if a suggestion is being made to me. If the hon. member suggests that I use every means available so that there will not be so many thefts at Christmas, I will answer that, every day, we try to take all necessary measures to ensure delivery of all parcels.

As for next Christmas, we have advised all postmasters to make doubly sure, when they hire additional staff for delivery of parcels, that these people are honest.

[English]

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): On a question of privilege—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Minister of Justice is rising on a question of privilege.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I just want to assure the House that I was doing very well with the Postmaster General until the hon. member got into it.

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege which has been aired in the House on several occasions. I draw Your Honour's attention to the fact there is a qualification attached to all questions asked in the House, namely, that they must be urgent and national in nature. I say that the urgency of questions has been completely destroyed by the roster system imposed on the House by the Prime Minister. It rules out the element of urgency. We must either change the rules applied to questions or the cabinet of this country must be responsible to every member of this House and be present to answer questions.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The right hon. member for Prince Albert.

• (3:00 p.m.)

Some hon. Members: Where is your leader?

Mr. Bell: Assiniboia. You will find out on Monday.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I apologize to the right hon. member for Prince Albert. He will be recognized in a moment.

An hon. Member: Here is your real leader.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond seeks the floor on a further point of order or question of privilege.