

Oral Questions

My question is very simple. Will the minister see that the directive given and the commitment given by the minister three weeks ago is carried out by the department? If he does not, there will be women and children on the coast of Labrador, on the coast of Newfoundland, who will be facing a pretty bleak Christmas this year.

Hon. Jean J. Charest (Minister of State (Youth) and Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport)): Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to make that representation to the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

I understand the department put forward measures as rapidly as it could. The department is dealing with those who are eligible now as rapidly as it can.

As I have said before, I will be very happy to make those representations to the minister.

Mr. Rompkey: Mr. Speaker, what we need is a definite commitment to act now. We have been on this case for a month. There are people who have had no income at all this summer or this fall. Christmas is coming.

Don't give us a commitment to study the problem; give us a commitment that you are going to help the people who need it in Newfoundland and Labrador, right now.

Mr. Charest: Mr. Speaker, this is not a commitment to study a problem. The government is very sensitive and very much aware of the particular difficulties of those people to whom the member is referring.

Some measures have been put forward, and the member knows that. We have dealt with those who are eligible under the rules as rapidly as we can.

The government intends to act as rapidly as it can to deal with all people who are concerned by this problem and do whatever it can to help them.

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TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Communications.

I know the minister is putting out the story that he did not snub the ministers of telephones from the prairies when they were here on Tuesday. After having personally witnessed the minister's uncomprehending, ill-in-

formed and indeed sometimes arrogant attitude toward this issue at his press conference and in two Question Periods, I have to believe the prairie ministers.

When the minister had personally promised that he would not act unilaterally before seriously considering a compromise proposal from the prairie alliance—and he received that compromise proposal several days before he made his surprise announcement, why has he not to this day made a substantive reply to that proposal?

When is he going to quit snubbing not only the prairie ministers but indeed all prairie Canadians?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, the process of defining a telecommunication policy for Canada started seven years ago and is ongoing. It involves both reflection and communication, and I am sure that thanks to our approach based on a sense of belonging and on compromise, we will put together for Canadians a thoroughly modern communication policy.

[*English*]

Mr. Funk: Mr. Speaker, I have two questions. When can they expect a substantive reply to that proposal?

When can they get a copy of the act which the minister has not given them?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Masse: Mr. Speaker, all things are falling into place. When the time comes, I am sure the green grapes will be ready to harvest.

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• (1500)

HOUSING

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State (Finance).

I am sure the Minister realizes that the most recent federal budget discriminated against the Province of Quebec generally and the city of Montreal in particular.

The fact is that, effective January 1, 1990, no funds will be made available under the rental component of the RRAP.