

*Oral Questions*REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT CATEGORICALLY REJECT ALL
BENEFIT REDUCTIONS

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister to do something about the benefits principle so that the unemployed can survive. Considering the fact that the Forget report's main recommendation is to make the benefits structure an annual one, which would result in unemployment insurance cutbacks for three quarters of the unemployed in this country, will the Minister reject out-of-hand any reduction in benefits in Canada?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister have already promised, the Minister of Finance when he brought down the Budget, and the Prime Minister when he said, in answer to a question put in this House, that the unemployment insurance review would not lead to a cut in federal contributions for the unemployed. I think what we have here is a matter of principle. This is a general statement, and within this context, we shall be discussing the implementation of the principle in the weeks to come. I think the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister were very clear in this respect.

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[English]

CANADA POST CORPORATION

SUPERMAILBOXES—REQUEST THAT INSTALLATION BE STOPPED

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard—Anjou): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Post Office. Since the supermailbox was introduced we have proved that it is discriminatory to Canadians, that it opens easily, reduces property value, and interferes with the privacy of mail. Will the Minister ask Canada Post to stop installation of this "super-duper" mailbox and restore home mail delivery?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member says that the case has been proven, then I wonder about his standard of proof. For example, he is talking about restoring home delivery where mail is left unattended in front of homes, and this is going on in the cities of this country. We put it in a locked box, and he claims that this is not safer. I do not know what he is talking about.

[Translation]

REQUEST FOR REINSTATEMENT OF HOME MAIL DELIVERY

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard—Anjou): Mr. Speaker, why does the Minister not admit that Canadians have seen enough of these superboxes, why not stop installing them and restore home delivery service?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): The Liberal Party should hire a new

information agency, Mr. Speaker. A poll taken last summer among people now serviced through these boxes reveals that 94 per cent of them are quite satisfied. Consult Canadians first, then you might make more enlightened utterances in the House.

● (1450)

[English]

Mr. Orlikow: That is nonsense. Come on, tell the truth.

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NATIONAL REVENUE

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH TAX CREDIT PROGRAM INVESTIGATION

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of National Revenue. The Minister and the Government have committed themselves to vigorously pursue those who have abused the SRTC program that cost the Canadian taxpayers some \$3 billion in tax scams. Can the Minister confirm that not one more dollar in cash or securities was collected by the Government between the period of January to October, 1986?

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I will certainly confirm that to my hon. friend when I check to see what the precise situation is. He has stated in the past that we are not vigorously pursuing the SRTC investigations. This is not so. We have 120 p.y.'s, and we have ample resources to pursue and to make certain that these fraudulent schemes, if they turn out to be such, are fully investigated and prosecuted.

NUMBER OF INVESTIGATORS

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): My supplementary question, through you, Mr. Speaker, is this. Will the Minister confirm if, in fact, there are only 15 full-time members on the staff who are dealing with attempting to get back some \$3 billion lost through this scheme?

Will the Minister confirm that the quota system is again back in use in his Department? This means that the small firms will be checked, but the large firms are getting away.

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of National Revenue): First of all I can assure my hon. friend that with respect to the latter part of his question he is absolutely wrong. The quota system is not back in effect. We are treating all taxpayers fairly and equitably.

Second, with respect to the information that he wishes to receive with regard to SRTC investigations and procedures, I can confirm that we have ample resources to do that job which we are committed to do on behalf of taxpayers. If more resources are required, they are available.