

Oral Questions

question. Close to 60,000 pensioners who are not yet ready to retire are already suffering because of present regulations that deduct their pension income or severance pay from unemployment insurance payments. Will the Minister rescind those unjust regulations both retroactively and permanently?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Hon. Member what is more positive for the unemployed than for us to say that they will be fully supported by the Government? What could be more positive than to tell these people that we will be supportive of the unemployed?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION
FROM UNITED KINGDOM

Mr. Speaker: I would like to draw Hon. Members' attention to the presence in the gallery today of a parliamentary delegation from the United Kingdom led by Mr. Anthony Nelson, Member of Parliament. The delegates are visiting Canada as guests of the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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CRIMINAL CODE

GUN CONTROL—AMENDMENT OF PROVISIONS

Mr. Alan Redway (York East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. Last spring the Minister's predecessor indicated in the House that he was presently reviewing gun control legislation particularly as it refers to handguns. Could the Minister advise the House if he is now prepared to introduce amendments to the Criminal Code and, if so, when those amendments will be introduced?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, indeed there is a review taking place pursuant to commitments made by my predecessor. The principles of that review will be the enhancement of public protection as well as the removal of the burden of some requirements with respect to legitimate gun owners. I hope to have the recommendations in my hand very shortly and that undoubtedly will lead to legislation.

[Translation]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

FORGET COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS—DEMAND THAT
MINISTER INTERVENE

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister or to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Now, no more hiding their heads in the sand! Two members of the Forget Commission revealed part of the Commission's recommendations. Now, this is what I want to ask the Minister: Quite honestly, can the Minister get on the telephone, call the Commission members and tell them that recommendations of this kind are unacceptable to Canadians? They are being paid \$1,000 a day: let them make recommendations that are fair to Canadians. Are you or are you not able to tell them so?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I can speak in the same tone of voice as the Hon. Member, but I shall refrain. I think he ought to know that when a Government gives a commission a mandate, the least it can do is let the commission submit its report. And one thing is certain: this side of the House, has a perfectly unanimous position on this question, which is more than can be said for the other side, considering what we saw on the weekend in Montreal with the young Liberals.

FUTURE OF EARLY RETIREES

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, earlier, the Minister was asking what more he could do to ensure . . . There are 34,000 people in Canada, 34,000 early retirees whose unemployment insurance benefits have been unfairly cut off. Can the Minister rise in the House and tell these people: You are going to be entitled to your benefits, and it will be retroactive? Can you do that or do you have to wait for the other guys?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Once again, Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of my hon. friend, we are going to make certain decisions with respect to the pensioners you referred to. We said we were going to do that within . . . and so far, there is no reason why I should do so before the Forget Report is tabled. In any case, this is all part of the same process we have been telling you about for the past year.

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● (1440)

[English]

AGRICULTURE

ASSISTANCE FOR GRAIN PRODUCERS

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. The people