

who retired after 1986 must requalify before we consider them to be eligible for unemployment insurance.

Now then, with respect to those who retired before 1986, I said and I repeat to my colleague that we are now reviewing the policy and the moment we are ready to unveil it, Mr. Speaker, we will do so. There is no flip flop.

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[English]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

FORGET COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING EARLY RETIREES

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the same Minister. On December 5, he rejected one of the few Forget recommendations which were any good, which was to cancel the cut in unemployment insurance for early retirement pensioners. At the same time he promised to reimburse some of those claimants. At first he prepared a questionnaire to assist the process, and then cancelled it. When will he stop the procrastination, this stop and go administration, and remedy this cruel and unjust policy?

[Translation]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I just answered the Hon. Member's colleague on the other side. In fact, I could give him more or less the same answer, although the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt at least did not have the impudence to refer to the Forget Report. Are you for or against the Forget Report? You will have to make up your mind some day. Instead of evading the issue, why not get to the point and say whether you are for or against the Report?

[English]

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, that is one of the most ridiculous statements I have ever heard. The Minister has already rejected one of the Forget recommendations. Does that mean he is going to reject all of the Forget recommendations? Otherwise why delay his statement to May 15? There was never any question of rejecting or accepting all the recommendations.

[Translation]

REQUEST THAT MINISTER LISTEN EVEN MORE TO PUBLIC

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, more than 50,000 Canadians were treated unfairly as a result of these cuts.

When will the Minister decide to listen to the many groups and individuals protesting against this policy, including his

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advisory council, the Forget Commission and even members of his own caucus, and cancel these cutbacks immediately?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, yesterday we saw that even people in the Hon. Member's Party do not always vote the same way, which did not keep them from sitting in the House today.

What I want to say to the Hon. Member is simply that on January 5, we made commitments with respect to people who retired before 1986. We are going to introduce a Bill, but only when the Government is ready to do so.

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[English]

PUBLIC SERVICE

REPORTED PURCHASE OF BRASS TOMBSTONE FOR FELINE'S FUNERARY RITES

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the President of the Treasury Board. Earlier in Question Period he was crowing about better spending of taxpayers' money. If the Government learned that an official in one of its Departments purchased a 15-pound brass tombstone for the burial of his wife's cat using public funds from his Department, would the Government request that person's resignation?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I was not aware of it. If the Hon. Member would like to give me the facts I will be happy to give him an answer at a later date.

Mr. Fulton: I am sure that if Erik Nielsen were sitting there I know the answer he would give. The cat's name was Boobnik.

PROPRIETY OF EXPENDITURE

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Does he believe that public funds should be used to buy tombstones for cats? Or should those who do this kind of thing be better employed in the private sector?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am sure the Hon. Member has an important matter to raise but I have to advise the Chamber that the Minister is really not in a position where he must reply to that question. The question is probably out of order. If the Minister wants to try to shed some light on this mystery he can do it.