

Oral Questions

[English]

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. George Baker (Gander—Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transport also said:

As far as I am concerned, unless there are improvements to help lower income people, or people whose jobs are very uncertain, I certainly can't support it.

In the absence of the Prime Minister, I ask the Acting Prime Minister if these rumours of cuts are substantiated in the presentation of the report, is the Government prepared to forget Forget?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is an expert in peddling and perpetrating rumours. Today is no exception. I know that he would want us to receive the report first, to analyse it, and then take a position on it.

So far as the stated objectives of this Government are concerned, in terms of unemployment insurance or any other programs that affect the disadvantaged regions of this country, it has always been the intention to make the programs better and more effective so that the benefits can accrue to the larger number of people. What we are looking for is a better system, an improved and more effective system rather than the system toward which the Hon. Member has alleged we are working.

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CANADA POST CORPORATION

PRESS REPORTS OF INCREASED CHARGES

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, would the Deputy Prime Minister confirm that the Government has approved an increase in Canada Post's first class mail from 34 cents to 36 cents? Can he confirm also reports in the press today that, indeed, the Government has approved extra charges for postal services to people who do not get door-to-door delivery but who want it and who are now enjoying service through the postal community boxes? Can the Deputy Minister confirm those two points?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I cannot confirm that. I am not aware of any such initiative. I will certainly check and get back to the Hon. Member.

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FISHERIES

FRASER RIVER FISH STOCKS—INDIAN PEOPLE'S ANXIETY

Mr. Ross Belsher (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Fisheries. The native leaders

who live in the Fraser Valley have grave concerns as to the allocation of the fish stocks going up the Fraser River. When will the natives have an opportunity of presenting their concerns as to how the fishery is being managed?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Excuse me, Mr. Speaker. I apologize for stepping out for a moment. Could the Hon. Member repeat the question?

Mr. Belsher: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries. The native leadership of the Fraser Valley have grave concerns on how the fishery is being managed, in particular the allocation of fish for the natives. When will they have an opportunity to make their advice known to the Minister on how this can be improved?

● (1200)

Mr. Siddon: Mr. Speaker, there are certain matters affecting members of some of the subject bands which are now before the courts. However, I am prepared to meet with members of the Sto:lo Tribal Council before the end of November and hear them out on the concerns that the Hon. Member raises today.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Churchill, one question.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

BENEFITS PAID IN ATLANTIC REGION

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Is the Minister of Transport speaking for the Government when he says there will be no cut-backs in unemployment insurance programs for Atlantic Canada? Or is the Government willing to state that any decision it will make will do nothing to reduce the amount of money going to that region?

[Translation]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, once more, what the Minister of Finance said, what the Government believes and what we are going to continue to believe is simply that we must ensure that the program analysis will not victimize the unemployed.

As I said earlier, we also have to consider the objective, and as the Minister of Transport indicated yesterday, anything which can improve the quality of our unemployment insurance services will be viewed as acceptable and will certainly receive our support.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Eglinton—Lawrence, one question.