

properly indicated, this question is one which is a matter of option for the provinces concerned. Provinces may instead opt for the Canada Assistance Plan, which allows provinces to pay much more substantial benefits of course. Most provinces have opted for the Canada Assistance Plan. Unfortunately, the province from which the hon. member comes from has preferred to stick to the other act regulating certain benefits.

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[English]

HOUSING

HOUSING FOR WELFARE RECIPIENTS—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. At the last welfare ministers conference the topic of housing for people who must resort to welfare was discussed and treated as an emergency, can the minister indicate if any plans have been put in place, in consultation with the provinces, in order to alleviate this problem.

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, yes, I am pleased to work on this area of concern with the provinces and I hope to be able to announce something very shortly.

SOCIAL SECURITY FOR DISTRIBUTION OF OLD AGE PENSION
CHEQUES IN VIEW OF DELAY IN MAIL DELIVERY

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare concerns a more immediate issue. What if any contingency plans has the government to distribute old age pension cheques, given that mail distribution at regional centres such as Toronto is at a standstill.

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I think this question should be asked of my colleague, the Postmaster General, who is in charge of the Post Office.

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, we ran into this problem once before in my riding, Verdun, I think four years ago. The member, who at that time was not Postmaster General, simply delivered the old age pension cheques.

Miss MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I am not so much concerned that the minister could deliver the cheques to the people of Verdun; I am concerned about seeing them delivered right across the country. Given the fact that regional centres such as Vancouver, Halifax and Toronto may well be out of operation, would the minister undertake to set up special distribution centres for old age pension cheques, of the kind set for the distribution of unemployment insurance payments, and to make those locations well known by utilizing all avenues of the media.

Oral Questions

Mr. Mackasey: Mr. Speaker, this type of emergency operation has already been planned. As I mentioned, what I did in Verdun every member of parliament can do in his own riding, so that there is no particular problem. We could distribute cheques to unemployment insurance offices, and those cheques that are not picked up, because senior citizens may be too old, can be delivered either with the help of the Legion or other people who are willing to do so.

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INDUSTRY

REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON PROGRAM OF INCENTIVES

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. As figures released today by Statistics Canada show that Canadian industry today is moving at a pace 4 per cent slower than that at which it was moving one year ago, that of course being the reason for the dramatic rise in unemployment recently, would the minister take the first opportunity on motions to outline to the House the program which he and his department are prepared to present to industry in the form of industrial incentives in order to get the economy moving at a satisfactory pace, one that will accelerate in the months ahead and provide the jobs which Canadian people have a right to expect.

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I think one of the best things the House can do right now is expedite the passage of the income tax legislation.

Mr. Hees: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, the government intends to do nothing in this regard.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hees: My supplementary question is this: Given that answer and that attitude, is it any wonder that the economy of this country is in its present bad state. You just couldn't care less, Alastair.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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AIR CANADA

ATTEMPTED DENIAL OF RIGHT OF MEMBER TO APPEAR
BEFORE LABOUR BOARDS—REFUSAL TO PAY EMPLOYEES
APPEARING AS WITNESSES

Mr. Ian Watson (Laprairie): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Transport. It relates to the incident in Montreal on December 4, when an Air Canada representative made representations to the Canada Labour Relations Board to the effect that the board should rule that citizens appearing before the board should not contact their Member of Parliament concerning matters before the board. Has the minister received any communi-