

cerned, his deputy minister and also with his parliamentary secretary.

DELAY IN PAYMENT OF BENEFITS—RESULTS OF STUDY
BY MINISTER

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, in view of the answer of the Prime Minister about reviewing the matter, I would like to ask him what is the result of his inquiry.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I came to rather numerous conclusions all of which I cannot list here but, essentially, the unemployment insurance program under the new act provides benefits which on the average are 40 per cent higher than the previous ones. That program has been implemented after certain changes stemming from the new taxation system, from the fact that unemployment benefits became taxable and that part of the program was affected as of last July, another as of January 1, 1972, another as of January 2—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I regret to interrupt the right hon. gentleman but it seems to me that the statement he wishes to make in reply to the question of the hon. member is becoming somewhat drawn out. I do not blame him, but I think the question is of a very general nature.

Does the hon. member for Lotbinière wish to ask a supplementary?

Mr. Fortin: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I hope it will be brief because we have to proceed with our business as soon as possible.

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, the right hon. Prime Minister has explained the provisions of the new legislation as compared with the old one. I would like therefore to ask him what results he and his advisors have obtained regarding the problems that have arisen in respect of the new legislation?

Mr. Trudeau: That is what I was explaining, Mr. Speaker. This new legislation, which differs from the old one, had to take into account three different dates together with all the factors I mentioned earlier. Its administration has created some difficulties. The UIC had foreseen these difficulties, hired auxiliary staff and opened new centres, but there have actually been delays in the mailing of unemployment cheques, largely because the contributors themselves according to the ceiling—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I regret to interrupt the right hon. gentleman once again and I appreciate fully that it is difficult for him to reply briefly, but I suggest to the hon. member that his question is of such a general nature that it should be answered by a statement on motions.

There are only a few minutes left before the end of the question period and I hope to obtain the co-operation of the hon. member and the ministers replying to questions.

Mr. Fortin: I have a very specific supplementary question, Mr. Speaker

In view of the fact that in my riding of Lotbinière 450 very specific cases have been set before the Unemploy-

Inquiries of the Ministry

ment Insurance Commission offices in Sherbrooke and Montreal, and we have not had any results, I would like to again ask the Prime Minister what very specific concrete steps—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member is asking the same question for the second time. The Prime Minister has already attempted to answer it; in fact, we have spent almost five minutes on it. I think we should now move on to another subject.

[English]

I notice that a number of my colleagues are getting impatient. I really think they should be given an opportunity. I will first recognize the hon. member for Hillsborough.

Mr. Nielsen: A supplementary question.

Mr. Speaker: I apologize to the hon. member—

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. A moment ago Your Honour referred to the fact that there was one minute remaining. However, I believe we started at 20 minutes to four—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member did not hear me correctly.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Yukon on a supplementary in a moment. I have recognized the hon. member for Hillsborough.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ALLEGED REPRESSION OF SOVIET JEWS WISHING TO
MOVE TO ISRAEL—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): My question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It concerns recurring reports of repression and restrictions upon Soviet Jews seeking to move to Israel and notably an article by Rabbi Stewart Rosenberg of Toronto. Can the minister advise if these reports have been investigated and have any representations or inquiries been made to the government of the Soviet Union?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we have been following the situation in the Soviet Union as closely as we can. Our ambassador keeps us informed on developments which he is able to ascertain from his contacts in Moscow. I believe the hon. member will agree there has been a very notable increase in the movement of Jews from the Soviet Union to Israel. I cannot, of course, guarantee that there will not continue to be repression.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I believe a moment ago I said I would recognize the hon. member for Yukon on a supplementary.