

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. McKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister knows very well that when the Leader of the Opposition moved that motion, we assumed those safeguards would be in place. It now transpires they are not in place.

My second question is to the Minister of National Defence. The second part of the UN mandate directs peacekeeping forces to assist the government of Lebanon in ensuring the return of its effective authority in southern Lebanon. This, in fact, interposes the peacekeeping force into a civil war which has been going on for over a year. It expects them to install last year's losers as the authority in the area. Is the minister satisfied with putting our forces in that position?

● (1442)

**Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, I wish the Conservative party would get together in their approach to this. Certainly, we have our act together.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Danson:** The conditions necessary in the present situation have been met as a result of the visit of the Secretary of State for External Affairs to the United Nations along with senior military officers. There is an element of risk involved, but we are satisfied our troops are playing a vital role in the area so that the situation can be stabilized and the people who should normally be in control can eventually be in control.

**Mr. McKinnon:** One of the criteria upon which Canada has always insisted is that the peacekeeping endeavour—I am quoting now—should be linked to a political settlement or at least to a reasonable expectation of a negotiated settlement. Is the hon. gentleman satisfied that such a condition exists in that area?

**Mr. Danson:** Mr. Speaker, they are certainly moving toward such an agreement and understanding. There is not perfection when these operations begin, but we are attempting to do our very best in contributing to bring stability to that area.

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#### UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

##### REMOVAL OF CERTAIN BENEFITS—INCREASE IN WELFARE COSTS TO PROVINCES

**Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. As a result of this government's incompetence in managing the economy, we now see the full weight of this incompetence borne on the backs of the municipalities in the sense that taxpayers will now have to bear the cost of the increased run on welfare. One of the problems—the minister himself mentioned this—is that there has been undue delay between application for and receipt of the first unemployment insurance payment. In the meantime, applicants turn to welfare.

I ask the hon. gentleman whether any specific steps are being undertaken now to advise UIC offices to expedite the processing of applications. Surely this is an issue which the minister can face promptly and with some sense of responsibility.

**Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I hardly need say once again that I do not altogether agree with the preamble to the hon. member's question. The studies we carried out in two previous years showed that two thirds of the people who had exhausted their benefit found jobs within a very short time and only about 4 per cent of them ended up on welfare rolls. The hon. member is drawing conclusions, but the people who were studying this subject indicated we needed more time to see just what the impact is.

In so far as efficiency is concerned, we have indicated there is a two-week waiting period. We have indicated to the provinces that if there is some concern about the claim on welfare because people are waiting an undue length of time for cheques, we are prepared to enter into an agreement with them. We will, in fact, make money available to them. Then, at least, when the UIC cheques are ready they can be assigned to the welfare offices to help out in that regard. I believe the efficiency rating of the officials who deal with this problem is very good throughout the country—though, of course, it can be improved.

**Mr. Alexander:** I do not accept the answer the minister has just given, and I would ask him to contact Paul Vezina, the social assistance director for the Peel region, who has stated that a major factor pushing up the welfare rolls is the number of people seeking welfare to tide them over the long wait for their first unemployment insurance benefits. That is for the edification of the minister.

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#### REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

##### PROGRAMS TO ALLEVIATE UNEMPLOYMENT

**Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. Two or three weeks ago the hon. gentleman expressed concern about the problems Ontario is facing at the present time, once again as a result of this government having destroyed the viability of the country. He told us he would be travelling through Ontario in order to determine how best his department could help. I would remind him once again of the situation: St. Catharines has an unemployment rate of 13 per cent; Sudbury, 13 per cent; Windsor, Kitchener—I could go on and on.

Since the minister's department is now involved with Montreal in the area of economic expansion, I ask what specific steps are being taken to bring relief to these cities of Ontario