

MANPOWER

UNEMPLOYMENT—REASON FOR DELAY OF FIRST MINISTERS' CONFERENCE TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): He has admitted that the change will result in increased welfare costs—I think he said there would be a slight increase. I should like the hon. gentleman to give the House the figures because that part of Canada is already worse off than the rest. Since the unemployment figures to be announced next week are likely to show for the first time the number of employed as being in excess of one million, can the minister tell us, in the absence of the Minister of Finance, why we shall have to wait until the end of February for a first ministers conference to deal with the problems facing the Canadian economy?

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration): I think the Prime Minister and the leaders of the various provinces would be more interested in results than in pretending to put on some kind of show. They have an abiding interest in helping the unemployed of this country and to hold a meeting just for the sake of holding a meeting would not help the unemployed.

Mr. Broadbent: I could not agree more. The unemployed want action, not meetings. In the light of the implication of the minister's answer which is that the provinces are somehow holding back—

Mr. Speaker: Order. If the hon. member has a question to ask, would he please put it?

Mr. Broadbent: Considering that the premier of Ontario as well as the former premier of Manitoba requested such a meeting many months ago, would the minister confirm that the real reason the government intends to wait until the end of February is related more closely to the election plans of the Liberal Party than to the economy?

Some hon. Members: Order!

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[Translation]

NATIONAL SECURITY

ALLEGED BROADCAST BY RADIO CANADA THAT JEOPARDIZES SECURITY—MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Gilles Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General.

In order to safeguard and protect national security, can the Solicitor General tell me whether the law can at a given time force the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to withhold some information? If so, who orders the CBC not to broadcast a news item at a given time?

Hon. Francis Fox (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, like any other Canadian citizen, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation must comply with the legislation governing the activi-

Oral Questions

ties of Canadians. If we had information to the effect that a corporation is about to issue information which is not of public interest but which would indeed affect the security of the nation, the attorney general would then have to take the necessary procedures to prevent it from broadcasting this information.

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): I would like to ask a supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Could the Solicitor General of Canada indicate to me whether he instructed the CBC last night, because of national security, not to broadcast over the French network news about the opposition day initiated yesterday by the Social Credit Party, whereas opposition days initiated by other opposition parties are always mentioned? Would the Solicitor General not have instructed the CBC not to mention the opposition day held yesterday?

Mr. Fox: Mr. Speaker, it could be said for once that there has been no leak about what has been going on in this assembly.

● (1427)

[English]

INQUIRY AS TO FATE OF ANNOUNCED EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the "minister of unemployment and immigration". Given the fact that the so-called economic summit conference of the Prime Minister and the first ministers will not take place till the end of February, and given the fact that we are now into a disastrous situation which is going to get worse, I ask the minister what became of the employment strategy which the government promised to the House before the end of the year. I hope that the minister will not try and duck behind the Canada Works program and the FLIP program.

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, in replying as Minister of Employment and Immigration to the hon. member for doom and gloom, my I say one of the things which the hon. member seems to forget is that since January the economy of Canada has created some 290,000 new jobs, or one million new jobs in the last five years. However, we cannot rest on that particular laurel because there are a lot of people out of work who want work. This is why we embark on programs like Young Canada Works and Canada Works, creating 116,000 jobs over seven months of a one year period. If we sat back like the hon. member simply wringing our hands, nothing would be accomplished in this country.

Mr. McGrath: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Given the fact that the five eastern provinces representing 37 per cent of the population account for over 48 per cent of the unemployed persons in this country, we have enough to be gloomy about, God knows. What new initiatives can we expect from the government, given the fact that 57.4 per cent of the new unemployment is in these five eastern provinces, which