

**Mr. Lewis:** This deliberate activity of reading a book while he is listening to and answering questions is a piece of disgraceful behaviour, Mr. Speaker.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member may wish now to ask the supplementary question.

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the courteous and thoughtful Prime Minister—

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Lewis:** There is no limit to that stupidity. I want to ask the Prime Minister whether, as is recommended in the report, the government has taken steps to minimize the disadvantages faced by citizens' groups in trying to influence government affairs and government policy as compared with business and professional groups. Has the government taken any steps to minimize those disadvantages or is it contemplating such steps.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I trust the hon. member will agree with the Chair that this is a very large question. If the Prime Minister can reply briefly he will be allowed to do so, but I suggest respectfully and kindly to the hon. member for York South that such a question normally calls for a very general statement to be made on motions. Having said that, however, I will allow the Prime Minister to reply to the hon. member's further supplementary question.

**Mr. Trudeau:** Well, the answer, Mr. Speaker, is of course that the many, many grants given in all the fields enumerated earlier are a demonstration of this.

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, may I ask one short further supplementary. Would the Prime Minister undertake to make a statement to the House on motions with regard to the report to which I have referred signed by Bernard Ostry, Chairman of the interdepartmental committee and tell us what steps the government has taken if any to implement the conclusions and recommendations in this report.

• (1540)

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, it is not my custom or the custom of the government to make statements on the basis of reports to the government which are confidential and which have been obtained by I do not know what means.

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[Translation]

#### UNEMPLOYMENT

SHERBROOKE—DELAY IN PAYMENT OF BENEFITS—  
WORKING CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYEES

**Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to hon. Minister of Manpower and Immigration.

#### *Inquiries of the Ministry*

A few days ago, in the minister's absence, due to circumstances beyond his control I am sure, I pointed out to his parliamentary secretary that a very difficult situation had developed in the Unemployment Insurance regional office in Sherbrooke, namely that the number of employees had been increased by about 25 or 30 per cent on the same premises, and that service to the unemployed was thus greatly reduced, since many of them had been waiting eight or ten weeks now to get their unemployment insurance cheques. Is the inquiry over now and can the hon. minister tell us whether something is being done in order to improve that situation?

[English]

**Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Manpower and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I must admit that the allegation regarding any slowness in the unemployment insurance office in Sherbrooke has not come to my attention, but I will look at it as soon as possible and report to the hon. gentleman.

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#### INDUSTRY

DOMINION AVIATION—POSSIBLE REFUSAL OF GRANT  
FOR DEVELOPMENT OF STOL AIRCRAFT—REQUEST FOR  
STATEMENT

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Did the government reject an application by Dominion Aviation, a western Canadian company involved in the Canadian development of STOL aircraft for grants and assistance under any government programs, and if so, in the light of the report of discussions between that company and American interests, including Howard Hughes Industries, for the possible sale of the corporation, will the government now review its decision?

**Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce):** Obviously, I cannot remember every request for research and development grants that comes to my department, and if I did, the hon. member would accuse me of having a hand in the selection.

**Mr. Baldwin:** In view of the urgency of this issue and the importance of the work in which this company is involved, will the minister give immediate priority to examining this issue to find out whether such a request has been rejected and whether the government intends to review its rejection in order to save this company?

**Mr. Pepin:** I will do that with great pleasure.

While I am on my feet, may I kill a rumour which was alluded to two days ago by the members for Lachine and Sainte-Marie—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. If the minister wishes to make a statement, he will have to revert to motions. However, if he is replying to a question which was asked previously, he can do so at this time. I recognize him for that purpose.