

ENFORCEMENT OF LAW REQUIRING PERSONS
RECEIVING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS TO
MAKE THEMSELVES AVAILABLE FOR WORK

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, since a statement by the Prime Minister of the country may easily be believed by people across Canada—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lewis:—easily and unfortunately, Mr. Speaker—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lewis:—and in view of some of the statements the Prime Minister has made, may I ask these questions, not as nitpicking but because they are important for the understanding of the people of Canada. Is the Prime Minister aware that the Unemployment Insurance Act requires a person seeking to draw unemployment insurance benefits to make himself available for work? As he made the statement there are people who prefer not to work and to take unemployment insurance benefits, is the Prime Minister doing anything to get the present law, not any new law, enforced so that people who draw unemployment insurance benefits do in fact make themselves available for work?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I think the answer is very simple, Mr. Speaker. A person who does make such an application, which he is obligated to do under the law, is not obliged to accept any job that is offered to him at any salary and at any place in the country. I would have thought the hon. member would know of such a provision in the law.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will recognize the hon. member for York South and there are four or five additional members seeking supplementaries. We have spent ten minutes on the first question. Perhaps we should limit the number of supplementaries and, if there is time, eventually return to this matter. For the moment the Chair will recognize the hon. member for York South on a supplementary.

AVAILABILITY OF JOBS FOR UNEMPLOYED

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Your Honour may wish to treat this as an original question rather than a supplementary. Is the Prime Minister saying that there are some jobs available, which no doubt there are on any given day, but jobs at very low wages and in undesirable working conditions which he is asking the unemployed to accept, no matter where they live? Is that the idea?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, certainly with the first part of that statement I am glad there is agreement between the leader of the New Democratic Party and myself. There are some jobs available. That is all I have been saying.

Mr. Lewis: As unemployment in the middle of January was 635,000 and in view of the likelihood that the unemployment figures which I understand may be released tomorrow will again show that level of unemployment, higher unemployment or a few thousand lower—I do not

Inquiries of the Ministry

know what they will show—is the Prime Minister suggesting there is more than one job per 12 or 15 unemployed available anywhere in Canada at this time? Is he suggesting that all the unemployed can find jobs or that even 95 per cent of them can find jobs?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am sure the hon. member appreciates that this is debate. For the moment I will recognize the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings on a supplementary.

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister. Can he offer any advice to those who are out of work and looking for a job other than what he offered in Victoriaville, namely, that people now leave where they are living and be prepared to work with a pick and shovel?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I said that the opposition had spent some time over the weekend reading badly abbreviated speeches I had made. I must also say that they are probably very poor readers of those bad reports.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will return to this subject in a moment. We will now move on to the second subject.

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[Translation]

MANPOWER

LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM—PROJECTS NOT
APPROVED—PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL FUNDS

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, in view of the absence of the President of the Treasury Board, may I put my question to the Minister of Finance. I see him smile: it augurs well.

As many local initiative projects presented either by municipalities or other bodies have yet to be approved, for lack of funds—no one says so, but that would seem to be the reason—may I ask the Minister of Finance whether or not additional funds will be put at the disposal of the Department of Manpower and Immigration to enable it to approve those projects, especially in the underdeveloped areas, and in particular in the riding of Bellechasse?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, in this regard I must consult my colleagues the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Manpower and Immigration.

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• (1430)

[English]

POWER

JAMES BAY HYDROELECTRIC DEVELOPMENT—PERMITS
REQUIRED UNDER NAVIGABLE WATERS PROTECTION
ACT—FEDERAL GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. On March 3 my hon.