

Mr. Alexander: Mr. Speaker, at least the minister is attempting to be honest at this particular time. Considering that the profitability of corporations is one of the main incentives for business to provide jobs, can the minister tell the House whether he anticipates the decline in corporate profits will continue and what effect continued poor business performance will have upon job creation this year?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could remind the hon. gentleman that corporate profits, just like individual earnings of workers, are of course restrained under the anti-inflation program.

Mr. Alexander: Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to let the minister know that the United States rate of productivity and growth is excellent compared to ours which certainly is disastrous. Since the declining profit performance of our corporations is in sharp contrast to the healthy situation in the United States, would the minister explain the reasoning behind this very serious situation, bearing in mind that without a healthy profit situation our recovery is in jeopardy.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, the healthy situation in the United States to which the hon. member refers is a 7.5 per cent rate of unemployment.

POSSIBILITY OF PROVISION FOR FULL EMPLOYMENT IN BUDGET

Mr. Max Saltzman (Waterloo-Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Finance as well. It is in regard to the unemployment figures released today. They are the highest since 1961. I should like to ask the minister if he can indicate to the House whether it is his intention in the budget—without asking for the details of the budget because I realize we are a few weeks from budget time but I believe this is terribly important in light of the shocking unemployment figures—to introduce a full employment budget?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would intend to introduce a budget which would attempt to strike a balance between our rate of inflation and the rate of unemployment in Canada.

Mr. Saltzman: Mr. Speaker, since the minister has analyzed the economic situation in Canada as a cost-push situation, and under the circumstances the only justification if there is a justification for wage and price controls is that there is a cost-push situation, it seems to me the minister is now in a position to stimulate the economy very effectively by bringing in a full employment measure without worrying about inflation which he says is under control by the Anti-Inflation Board. I should like to ask the minister, in light of his own analysis, whether he is prepared to bring in a full employment budget?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, I think I would emphasize the fact that, while the anti-inflation program has had some response to this point, it is and has been our intention that the impact should be gradual and that we should support and use appropriate fiscal and monetary policies. The government's views on what would be an

appropriate fiscal policy will be indicated at budget time in two weeks.

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MANPOWER

GOVERNMENT ACTION TO FIND EMPLOYMENT FOR STUDENTS

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a supplementary to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In light of the figures released today showing a 7.4 per cent unemployment rate and in view of the fact that in the next month not only university students but also high school students will be finishing their school year and will be looking for jobs, several hundred thousand of them, I should like to ask the minister whether his department is working on any plans to find employment for more than the 12,000 students who will be given jobs under the plans announced by the minister up until now.

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, there are very elaborate efforts underway, and have been for some time in working with the private sector to stimulate the placement of students and young workers. There are no additional budgetary commitments decided upon in terms of programs like the Opportunities for Youth program at this time.

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[Translation]

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

INCREASE IN SUGAR PRICES—REQUEST FOR INQUIRY

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask a question of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Can the minister tell the House whether an inquiry was conducted lately to determine if the sugar price increase announced a while ago by the refineries is justified, if not does he intend to order such an inquiry and, if necessary, not only sue but condemn the refineries concerned, which are getting as greedy as the oil companies?

● (1420)

[English]

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, investigations are conducted by a quasi judicial board, and it is not the practice for a minister to reveal what investigations are taking place unless it is made public knowledge by some third party.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS

PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR INDUCING LABOUR TO RETURN TO LABOUR RELATIONS AND ECONOMIC COUNCILS—DATE OF RETURN

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Labour. In view of the