

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

put a question to me yesterday about the Champlain bridge. He asked me to tell the house whether the plans for the bridge approaches were completed and, if not, what was the cause of the delay.

In reply, I may inform him that the plans are completed.

The hon. member also asked the following supplementary question:

Is it a fact that the government is waiting for the Montreal city authorities to decide where the east-west express highway will pass before deciding on the site for the Champlain bridge approaches?

Well, the national harbours board will not wait necessarily until the lay-out of the east-west express highway is completed, but it will take into consideration the city's plans so that the bridge approaches may be connected with the express highway in question.

(Text):

**UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE****REPORTED DENIAL OF DAY'S BENEFITS TO  
UNEMPLOYED DELEGATION**

On the orders of the day:

**Miss Judy V. LaMarsh (Niagara Falls):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Labour arising from a report in the Niagara Falls *Evening Review* of Saturday, May 6, where it was reported that one Harry Roberts, the president of the union for the unemployed, had inquired of the local unemployment insurance commission why one day's benefit had been deducted for the day he had been in Ottawa. He said he received a cheque with a note saying "Not available while in Ottawa". Upon inquiring further he was told that the information came from the newspapers and the quotation was, "You have been getting too much publicity, I fear".

My question is, in view of this government's predilection for publicity, is the criterion now—

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The hon. member is entitled to ask for information but not to make debating remarks such as she was making. Perhaps the hon. member would ask her question before one o'clock.

**Miss LaMarsh:** —is the criterion as to whether or not one receives unemployment insurance to be whether one has publicity about his presence in an area on a day for which he is to be paid?

**Hon. Michael Starr (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. lady has asked me a question similar to the one she asked last

Thursday, as reported in *Hansard* at page 4322. The hon. member's question was:

Has the minister received information to the effect that notwithstanding his assurance given to members of the unemployed delegation who visited Ottawa ten days ago, they have been deprived of their unemployment insurance benefits for the day of that visit?

I advised the hon. member that I had turned over the correspondence I had received to the unemployment insurance commission. That correspondence was signed by Mr. Heinz Richter, chairman of the Welland union of unemployed. On the basis of the information I have now received from the unemployment insurance commission I am dispatching today the following answer to Mr. Richter:

I referred the question to the unemployment insurance commission who inform me that the individual cases are now being decided by the adjudicating authorities authorized under the provisions of the act. The question at issue is whether the person concerned has maintained his availability for work.

Section 54 (2) of the Unemployment Insurance Act reads in part:

"An insured person is disqualified from receiving benefit in respect of every day for which he fails to prove that he was

(a) capable of and available for work".

This is a statutory requirement that permits of no discretionary powers.

This means that a claimant must be ready, able and willing to immediately accept suitable work. The claimants concerned are unlikely to be considered as having fulfilled this requirement on the day(s) engaged in the meeting that took place in Ottawa.

It is for this reason that benefit has been withheld pending decision of the adjudicating authorities.

**Miss LaMarsh:** A supplementary question—

**Mr. Speaker:** I wonder whether the hon. member would mind deferring her supplementary question until after the adjournment.

At one o'clock the house took recess.

**AFTER RECESS**

The house resumed at 2.30 p.m.

**Miss LaMarsh:** I should like to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Labour. In view of the fact that among the delegation there were between 600 and 1,000 unemployed, can the minister say, bearing in mind that there were only some 60 from the county of Welland, whether individuals from any other riding in Ontario have been deprived of their day's benefit as a result of coming to Ottawa with the delegation.

**Hon. Michael Starr (Minister of Labour):** The first part of the hon. lady's statement is incorrect. As to the second part, I have