

Some hon. Members: Resign!

Mr. Speaker:—but I would think that asked in those terms the question is not in order. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition might care to rephrase it.

An hon. Member: Thirty buck Benson.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, I agree that the minister does not have to answer the question but I should like to direct a supplementary question to the Prime Minister. In view of the calamitous effect of the policies pursued by this government and by the Minister of Finance, is the Prime Minister prepared to assure Parliament that he will not permit this Minister of Finance to present another budget to the House?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

INCREASES IN UNEMPLOYMENT AND COST OF LIVING—
GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. David Lewis (York South): I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that we now have a situation of very high unemployment, as has been indicated, and also a rise in the consumer price index for the first four months of the year at an annual rate of around 5 per cent, I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether from now on the government will be fighting unemployment or fighting inflation, since we have both?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we have always said that we had to beware of these two dangers to our economy and we have fought both.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: We have done it in spite of the advice of opposition parties—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Come off it.

Mr. Trudeau:—who all through the inflationary period were suggesting that we spend more.

An hon. Member: That is a lot of nonsense.

An hon. Member: Why don't you try kissing it away?

An hon. Member: Kiss your problems away.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Prime Minister this simple question to which I think the Canadian people have the right to an answer: Can the government now state to Parliament and the people of Canada that a policy of full employment is its first priority and not its phobic notion of inflation and that it will therefore abandon the gradual policy of hastening economic recovery that it has carried on until now because of its fears and take full measures?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, when the Leader of the New Democratic Party speaks of our fear of inflation I must remind him that in the first full year of this government it was his party and the Conservative party which were blaming the government for not coming to grips with the problem of inflation. Therefore, if there was any phobia it began on that side.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member for Champlain wish to put a supplementary question?

Mr. Maite: No, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker. In view of the unemployment figures announced today and the fact that the cost of living has gone up during the past three months at an annual rate of 7.2 per cent, showing that the government has obviously lost control of the economy, does the government intend in the near future to announce to Parliament a new approach to these twin problems of inflation and unemployment?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Finance just said, if there are any new approaches we will announce them in the budget, but we believe that until then the government must remain free to adopt whatever measures it feels are necessary to combat whichever of these evils is menacing the Canadian economy.

An hon. Member: Don't you know which one?

Mr. Trudeau: The hon. member knows that in managing the economy you must look at the trends, and by the indicators which the opposition parties are now accepting, the seasonally adjusted figures, which incidentally they were accusing the government of hiding behind a few months ago—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I have heard from the members opposite that it was intellectual dishonesty to use these figures they are now using.

An hon. Member: You can do better than that.

Mr. Trudeau: But if they are now prepared to accept them I suggest that they look at the trends since last September and they will find that the economy is improving.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the trend, of course, is established by a series of figures, not just by one taken