

Oral Questions

INFLATION—DEADLINE FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH VARIOUS GROUPS SEEKING CONSENSUS

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Can the Prime Minister inform the House whether a deadline has been set on the consultative process with the Minister of Finance to be embarked upon sometime in the new year? He has informed the House that formal and informal discussions with a variety of groups are taking place and will continue in the new year. Has a deadline been set for those consultations in order that some final program may emerge from them?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we have a time frame, which I think is a more correct description than a deadline. The time frame will have to accommodate itself to the consultation process and to the exploratory phase of that consultation process. It will depend on the timing with which the various groups are prepared to meet with the various ministers. It will also depend on the diagnosis that cabinet will make as the consultations go on. It may be felt important to either prolong or shorten them.

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[Translation]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

REQUEST THAT SERVICES REMAIN ADEQUATE DURING HOLIDAY PERIOD

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration.

Since there is a temporary increase in unemployment in many regions of Quebec because of manpower retraining and inflation, since also the Unemployment Insurance Commission regional offices do not have sufficient staff, and in view of the coming Christmas and New Year holidays, can the Minister of Manpower and Immigration firmly assure the House that the appropriate services and sufficient personnel will be available so that everyone entitled to unemployment benefits might receive his cheques regularly and promptly during this difficult period?

[English]

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I will of course assure the hon. member without ambiguity that that is the objective. If the hon. member without ambiguity will give me precise details and the locations in which he finds the circumstances, it may assist me in directing further effort toward solving any such problem.

[Translation]

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I therefore submit the particular problem of my constituency, in Victoriaville, where there is a flagrant lack of personnel and where the problem is made critical by the increase in the unemployment rate. Can the minister assure me that now that he is aware of this particular case, he will take the necessary measures, first to increase the funds provided for the Local Initiatives Program in our region and second, to provide

[Mr. Trudeau.]

personnel in sufficient number for the recipients to receive their cheques as soon as possible?

[English]

Mr. Andras: Mr. Speaker, local initiatives was not mentioned in the first question. I will guarantee to look at the situation of staff availability to assist my hon. friend's constituents. If action is necessary, I will do my best to provide it.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

THEORETICALLY PERFECT AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER CONSTRUCTED AT DOWNSVIEW—REQUEST THAT DESIGN FACTORS BE GIVEN TO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of National Defence. Is the minister aware that a three-year study on the best design for an air traffic control tower, which took into account the need to eliminate stress and create a healthful environment, good temperature and humidity, low noise level and good visibility, was undertaken by the Air Element of the Canadian Armed Forces and that a mock-up of this theoretically perfect tower was built at Downsview? If so, is it the intention of the minister and his officials to make this knowledge available to officials of the Department of Transport before this mock-up is dismantled and the design factors so carefully prepared by officers of DND are lost?

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, our department works very closely with the Department of Transport. If there is valuable information to be passed on, it will certainly be relayed to that department.

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PUBLIC SERVICE

RETIREMENT OF FIVE DEPUTY MINISTERS—DATE OF ANNOUNCEMENT OF REPLACEMENTS

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. As there are now five deputy ministers who have decided that they prefer to take early retirement rather than continue to work for this government, and knowing the government it is very easy to understand why this is so, when does the Prime Minister expect to announce the names of the palace guards who will be appointed to replace these gentlemen when they retire?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Hees: Because of the Prime Minister's reticence and reluctance to answer that very straightforward and sensible question, I would ask him whether he is holding off giving me this information because he is planning to make such an announcement at a family gathering, presided