

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Hees: He won't say one word about it.

Mr. Trudeau: Would you?

Mr. Hees: You stick around for the debate and I will tell you a few things this afternoon that will do you a lot of good.

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a supplementary question to the Prime Minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Athabasca now has the floor.

Mr. Yewchuk: A supplementary question to the Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker. Will he be prepared to answer questions today or is he going to sit and pout throughout the question period as he did yesterday?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

LABOUR CONDITIONS**MEASURES TO COPE WITH UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUNG CANADIANS**

Mr. J. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister if I can get his attention. In view of the very significant increase in unemployment among young single Canadians between the ages of 14 and 19 and also young married people between the ages of 20 and 34, is the government considering special emergency measures for dealing with unemployment among the younger members of Canada's labour force?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, if I may answer that question, may I remind my hon. friend that the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate has dropped consistently since last October.

Mr. Hees: It has not.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hees: It is up this month and will go up.

An hon. Member: The minister should be accurate.

Mr. Hees: He knows that perfectly well.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I hope the hon. member will do a little research before he makes his speech this afternoon.

Mr. Hees: My research was done for me by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. I saw a

report this morning and I hope the minister will also look at it.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It is my understanding that a question was asked by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby. Perhaps the reply should be directed to that hon. member. I also understand that the minister had not quite finished replying to the question. I ought to remind hon. members that we have an opposition motion for consideration later today and it will to some extent, I gather, cover much of the ground now being investigated by questions which have been asked and answers given. Perhaps we should exercise some restraint now in this regard and hold our fire for later in the day.

Mr. Broadbent: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I thought the minister was about to conclude his answer.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I was about to put the unemployment and employment situation in perspective by saying that the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate, which stands at 4.5 per cent, has experienced a monthly reduction since last October. I think that is important to remember. I think it also important to state that the unemployment rate in Quebec and the Atlantic provinces today is lower than it was a year ago and that the unemployment situation in various parts of the country has to be considered.

Mr. Hees: What about Ontario?

Mr. MacEachen: May I reply directly to the question of the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby. We are constantly attempting to ensure the entry of young people into the Canadian labour force. Just a few days ago I made a statement about our program for students. We intend to continue it in the forthcoming year. However, there is no plan at the moment to introduce any emergency program along the lines suggested.

Mr. Broadbent: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. As usual, the minister's answer had nothing to do with the question asked. Since the minister said on January 15, in replying to a question of the hon. member for York South, that his department would consider changes in the rules for manpower retraining as they affect young people, is he now in a position to announce to the House what his decision is in this regard?

Mr. MacEachen: No, Mr. Speaker. That examination of the rules under the Canada Manpower training program is under consid-