

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

go back to those asked by the hon. member for Peace River.

**Mr. Speaker:** I appreciate the point being made indirectly by the hon. member for Edmonton West. It is sometimes difficult for the Chair to determine, when a supplementary question is asked, whether it is a genuine supplementary. Even when I have doubts about it, sometimes it is easier to allow the question to be asked. Without further comment, I recognize the hon. member for Edmonton West.

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**THE CANADIAN ECONOMY**

PROPOSED UNITED STATES DISC PROGRAM—FORMAL  
PROTEST CONCERNING LEGALITY IN RELATION TO  
GATT

**Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West):** My question is directed to the Prime Minister and relates to the legality or alleged illegality of the employment support bill and whether the Canadian government has examined the DISC program to see whether it contravenes the GATT undertakings. If so, what conclusion has the government reached concerning this proposal and what does it intend to do about it? Is there to be any formal protest by the Canadian government regarding the illegality of the DISC program under GATT?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Our position on the surtax was made in the GATT forum but our position cannot be made on a United States program which is not law yet but is just something that is being talked about. This House knows that an item does not become law the day it is introduced by the government.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** Does the Prime Minister anticipate that it will be easier to get changes once Congress has taken the necessary action to implement the DISC program or does he feel that the government of Canada should make its views known now with regard to that program? Has the Minister of Finance been instructed to put forward the views of the government in contacts with the appropriate American government officials whom he will meet during the course of the conference in the next two weeks?

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, it is apparent to the country that on the totality of the President's announcement in August representations were made by the ministerial mission which went from Canada to Washington and subsequently in meetings at official levels. We are not making any representations in international forums at the GATT level on something which has not yet become a matter of law or policy of the United States government but we have talked at some great length, as the House knows, although not always with the approval of the members of the opposition, to the people in Washington.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** A further supplementary—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. the hon. member has had two supplementaries.

[Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West).]

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** Others had three.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Annapolis Valley and the hon. member for Témiscamingue and return to the hon. member for Edmonton West and other hon. members with further supplementaries, including the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

PROPOSED UNITED STATES DISC PROGRAM—CANADIAN  
PROPOSAL TO GROUP OF TEN RESPECTING  
CO-ORDINATED REPRESENTATIONS TO IMF MEETING

**Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley):** My supplementary is also directed to the Prime Minister. Can we assume from his earlier answer, Mr. Speaker, that, whatever the contingency plan is, Canada has no firm proposal for the meeting of the Group of Ten to combine the other nations of the Group of Ten in a co-ordinated strategy against the DISC proposal so that representations in a co-ordinated, collective way can be made when the International Monetary Fund meets a week later?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** No, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member for Témiscamingue.

**Mr. Nowlan:** A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** As I suggested to hon. members, at this point the Chair will recognize the hon. member for Témiscamingue subject to returning to the hon. member in a moment.

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● (2:50 p.m.)

[Translation]

**UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

REFUSAL TO PAY BENEFITS TO EMPLOYEES LAID OFF  
BY QUÉMONT MINE

**Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Labour.

Has he received representations from the municipal authorities of Rouyn concerning miners laid off at the Quémont mine in view of the Unemployment Insurance Commission's refusal to pay them benefits on grounds that the mine is paying them a severance allowance for their 20-odd years of service?

Can the minister tell us whether unemployment insurance benefits will be paid to those miners?

[English]

**Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, I will have to check with the Unemployment Insurance Commission to see precisely whether the \$750 that some of these miners have received in the form of severance pay is considered in relation to income. Usually what happens is that the moneys are considered as wages or deferred wages and these people become eligible for unemployment insurance only after the moneys received as severance pay or holiday pay have been apportioned