

[Translation]

INQUIRY AS TO DATE OF INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): My second question, Mr. Speaker, will be for the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

To the best of my memory, an extensive study on pensions under all aspects, both public and private, was initiated in September 1976 within the government and in the public sector; it related more particularly to the Department of Finance and the Department of National Health and Welfare. My question is: When will this study be tabled in the House and referred to the appropriate committee? I also would like the minister to tell us whether she intends to introduce a bill based on this report and if so what will be the scope of such a bill?

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, just before Christmas I had a preliminary meeting concerning the preparation of the report. I have not yet received the report and so it is too early to answer the other questions. However, I will inform the House as soon as I get the report.

INELIGIBILITY OF CANADIAN WORKERS TO RECEIVE
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS

Mr. Heward Grafftey (Brome-Missisquoi): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

Earlier this afternoon the hon. member for St. John's East pointed out that every day, because of the economic situation in Canada, about 2,000 Canadians become ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits and that in many cases they are forced to ask for welfare. Can the minister then tell the House if she has discussed this matter with the provinces and what immediate action we can anticipate from her to alleviate this serious situation?

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the administration of welfare programs is under provincial jurisdiction. All Canadian deputy ministers of social services, including the deputy minister from my department, will get together as early as tomorrow in a federal-provincial meeting during which this subject matter will be dealt with.

Mr. Grafftey: I want to ask a supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Considering that situation which is affecting many poor families in Canada, can the minister explain to the House why she has recently contacted the provinces by letter informing the provincial welfare ministers that the federal government intends to cut assistance in this regard in the area of welfare specifically?

Miss Bégin: I regret that the hon. member's information is out of tune with the facts, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to

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correct immediately the wrong impression he is giving to this House.

About December 14 last I wrote to my provincial counterparts to propose an early meeting at their convenience regarding the whole financing of social services, which in eight out of ten provinces would lead to an increase in real expenses and which would result in all provinces having an identical average per capita outlay within ten years.

As was explained in a press release issued at that time, unfortunately the country's economic constraints have forced me to delay for a year the granting of a supplementary amount of \$132 million which is offered to the provinces and which will eventually be indexed, on agreement, after a year.

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● (1502)

[English]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS TO ALLEVIATE UNEMPLOYMENT
AMONG YOUNG PERSONS

Mr. Paul Dick (Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. In light of the steady increase in youth unemployment from 9.7 per cent in December of 1973 to 10.6 per cent in December of 1974, to 13 per cent in 1976 and to over 15 per cent today, and in view of the fact that it will continue to increase for the foreseeable future and that the existing youth employment programs apparently are not turning the tide, what specific programs will the minister's department implement during this session to combat this critical situation?

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I have catalogued for the hon. member and for this House several of the programs we have in place to deal with youth unemployment in so far as my own department is concerned. The employment tax credit program announced yesterday by my colleague will have a beneficial effect. Jobs will be created by the construction of the pipeline. All these things will have their impact in turning this situation around, as the hon. member has suggested.

Mr. Dick: In view of the fact that the minister has indicated no new programs in his department to combat the youth unemployment situation, is it the view of his department that this particular situation is under control, or does his department feel that the advice given in Toronto in April of last year by the Prime Minister to unemployed graduates, that they leave this country and go elsewhere for employment, is the appropriate advice for this year?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.