

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

Minister or to the Minister of Labour in respect of the subject raised by the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate. The question relates to the reported alarming increase of some 40 per cent over last year in unemployment among those between the ages of 14 and 24. Can the Prime Minister or the Minister of Labour give the House any information as to the distribution of this unemployment among youth across the country? To what extent is it concentrated in specific regions such as urban communities or in the countryside? I ask this question because I assume that since this has been a continuing development over a number of months this matter has been under investigation.

**Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, the appropriate minister to whom this question should be addressed is the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. I have not conducted a personal, detailed study of this matter. The only thing I have noticed is that the seasonally adjusted unemployment figure has dropped for the third or fourth consecutive month.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Prime Minister or anyone else in the government whether, in view of this very alarming trend over a number of months, any study of the distribution of unemployment in this age bracket has been ordered? Perhaps even more important, has the government ordered any study as to the reason, if any, for this alarming increase in unemployment among Canadian youth which must be a source of great concern to the government as well as to us?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, a regional breakdown in respect of particular groups may not be available in part because the size of the survey in regard to a particular group may not in itself be sufficient to justify any particular conclusion. The information available, however, is that the explanation for the greater number of unemployed in the age group to which reference has been made is that in some measure it is due to the unusually small decline in the size of the group seeking employment rather than in the amount of employment available.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, if the minister considers that an explanation, I think the Prime Minister had better redistribute the responsibilities of the government. May I ask the Prime Minister whether, in view of this obvious lack of information on the part of his colleagues in respect of this important subject, he will direct that an inquiry be made into this matter? Will he also report at a very early date, before the Christmas recess, what measures the government proposes to take directly related to this alarming increase in unemployment among Canadian youth?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, in very recent days the Minister of Finance has indicated what we are doing about employment, and debate has gone on in the House on that subject. I think opposition speakers realized, as indicated in their contri-

[Mr. Stanfield.]

butions to that debate, that it was difficult to stimulate the economy and say that such stimulation should only profit a certain age group.

## UNEMPLOYMENT—MANPOWER DEPARTMENT FORECAST

**Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. Mr. Douglas D. Peters, chief economist for the Toronto-Dominion Bank, speaking at the Toronto School of Business, estimated that the unemployment figure for 1971 will not be less than 6 per cent, the figure which has obtained in 1970. May I ask the minister whether he is prepared to table the forecast which his department has made as to the unemployment figures for the coming months and, if possible, for the entire 1971 period?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I certainly will be glad to look once again at the question of whether the available statistical analysis would be helpful. If it seems that it might be I will look at the question of making it available.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** In view of the fact that the figures just released this morning show that there were 476,000 unemployed in November, which is 57,000 greater than the previous month and 122,000 higher than November, 1969, can the minister tell us whether the forecast of his department indicates that this figure is likely to decline or increase over the coming months?

**Mr. Lang:** Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is quite aware of the seasonal factors which normally affect unemployment from time to time. Of course the figures he quotes are accurate but they tend to ignore the fact that the seasonally adjusted rate has in fact dropped in the past month from the previous month. The difficulty in being more precise about the analyses we may have available is that hon. members opposite are apt to proclaim them to the country as targets rather than anything else if they were made available. It is our objective, of course, through our many policies to bring the figure of unemployment down as far as possible.

## REDUCTION OF PERIOD IN LABOUR FORCE TO QUALIFY FOR MANPOWER TRAINING AND ALLOWANCES

**Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** In view of the fact that the unemployment among youth, those under 25 years of age, is now some 212,000 or about 45 per cent of the unemployed, would the minister consider reducing the period of time during which an individual must be in the labour force in order to qualify for manpower training and allowances?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, this question has in fact been under constant consideration with the provincial ministers and other interested persons. It is, of course, a ques-