

Oral Questions

will be ample opportunity when the main estimates are again before the committee. I for one will welcome that opportunity to dispel some of the myths being spread by many.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Vancouver South and the hon. member for Hastings seek to rise on supplementaries and will be recognized for that purpose. Then I will see the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby.

REINTRODUCTION OF BILL RESPECTING
ADMINISTRATION

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. Can the minister advise whether it is the intention of the government to reintroduce Bill C-125 concerning the administration of the Unemployment Insurance Act now, or in 1974?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the position of the government was stated by me on November 11, as recorded at page 7611 of *Hansard*. If the hon. member will read it in full, I think he will find that is the position of the government, which has not changed.

Mr. Fraser: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the minister. The minister is aware of the statement made by the Minister of the Environment. Is the minister in agreement that is government policy?

Mr. Andras: Mr. Speaker, I discussed this with my colleague. I think the reports are incorrect. There is no disagreement. The statement I made as recorded at page 7611 of *Hansard* is the policy of the government.

REQUEST FOR INQUIRY INTO RELUCTANCE TO PAY
INCREASED PREMIUMS

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Hastings): Mr. Speaker, about a month ago I asked, in the absence of the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, his stand-in for that day whether or not, in light of the growing number of employees and employers who are reluctant to pay the excessive increase in benefit premiums, the government would undertake an inquiry into the matter. In view of the Prime Minister's answer today, I again ask that question of the minister since I have not yet received an answer.

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member has had an answer to that question several times, also augmented by the answer the Prime Minister gave a few moments ago.

[Mr. Andras.]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR REPRESENTATIONS TO CHILEAN
GOVERNMENT TO EXTEND DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS
FOR SAFE CONDUCT

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the fact that apparently there are 45 Chilean refugees at the Canadian Embassy in Santiago, and that the Chilean government apparently has fixed a deadline for applications for safe conduct as of yesterday, which has been met in respect of the 45, does this ruling exclude new applicants and, if so, will the Canadian government make representations to the Chilean government to extend the deadline so that the humanitarian policies announced by the Canadian government in respect of refugees may be fully implemented?

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre De Bané (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I can confirm to the hon. member that indeed 45 Chileans are in the Canadian chancery in Santiago. As for the second part of his question the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs conveyed yesterday to the chargé d'affaires of Chili here in Ottawa the feelings of the Canadian government on the matter.

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[English]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

INQUIRY AS TO OPERATION OF COMPUTERS

Mr. W. C. Scott (Victoria-Haliburton): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. Can the minister assure the House that the computer systems of the Unemployment Insurance Commission pay centres have been upgraded to eliminate the errors and over-payments that have been so prevalent in the past?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the overpayments, contrary to some distorted information given by some people, were not due to computer error but were identified by control measures which discovered, for example, that some people were drawing unemployment insurance when they already had jobs and should not have been drawing benefits. That is the sort of situation that was corrected on the basis of interviews. The computer was not, as indicated by one hon. member, the guilty party. The answer to the general question is yes, the computers are performing just as well as the people who put the information into them.