

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Mr. Lewis:** As a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that some of the suggestions made in the throne speech are bound to take some considerable time before they have effect, has the government any immediate plans to deal with the increase in unemployment this winter by the provision of some works that would be productive and useful, or does it have any other plans that would absorb unemployment this winter?

**Mr. Trudeau:** As I just said, Mr. Speaker, the other plans are that we have manpower retraining and manpower mobility programs, and in the winter months these are being increased. They will be used to employ the unemployed in a productive way and make them more productive to the economy than was the case before.

[Translation]

**Hon. Martial Asselin (Charlevoix):** Mr. Speaker, since the winter works program is a shared cost program with the provinces, could the Prime Minister tell us if the government consulted the provinces before deciding to bring it to an end?

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, the winter works program was discussed several times with the provinces. They knew that each year the possibility of putting an end to such works and replacing them with more productive ones was discussed and we informed the provinces this year of our decision.

**Mr. Asselin:** Mr. Speaker, were the provinces advised before the Prime Minister made a statement? Were the provinces consulted?

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, as I said, the provinces knew that the program was being reviewed and they were waiting for our answer. We gave them our answer, which was negative.

**Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Mr. Speaker, after the many protests received from Canadian municipalities, could the Prime Minister tell us whether the government contemplates reconsidering the matter of the winter works program, especially for the coming winter, with a view to using this program to fight efficiently against unemployment?

**Mr. Trudeau:** No, Mr. Speaker, we do not contemplate returning to that program.

[Mr. Trudeau.]

There were many protests but also a great number of congratulations from several municipalities which realized that the winter works program had not, in recent years, served its true purpose, that is the productive employment of Canadian workers in centres where the need was the greatest.

[English]

#### SUGGESTED INCREASE IN FEDERAL MINIMUM WAGE PROVISIONS

On the orders of the day:

**Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the right hon. Prime Minister. Since the Prime Minister has stated that he agrees with the finding of the Economic Council of Canada that poverty in Canada is a national disgrace, and since the commission has reported that a great deal of this poverty occurs because people who are working are not receiving sufficient wages to enable them to bring up their families in decency and reasonable comfort, do the Prime Minister and the government intend in the very near future to increase the minimum wage as it applies to industries under federal jurisdiction, particularly as this would be an incentive or an example to the provincial governments?

**Right Hon. P.-E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** I will have to ask the Minister of Labour whether he has that under consideration.

**Hon. B. S. Mackasey (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Labour is always conscious of the needs of the working man in this country, and will give consideration to the suggestion of the hon. member.

**Mr. Hees:** Does the Prime Minister in the very near future intend to call a conference with the provincial premiers to discuss this very vital problem?

**Mr. Trudeau:** The question asked by the hon. member is one relating to wages, costs, prices and incomes. Our attack seeks to ensure that inflation will be curtailed in Canada. We believe this will be the best attack on the problem.

**Mr. Hees:** Can we take it then that the Prime Minister and his government intend to do absolutely nothing in this regard?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.