

Inquiries of the Ministry

the other begins to collect old age pension, in view of the economical problems facing those people?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I did not quite catch the second part of the question but as regards the first part the government obviously wishes to give as much money as possible immediately to everybody but we must manage the government taxes and revenue as fairly as possible.

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

Would it not be easier for the Prime Minister and his government to use the services of the Bank of Canada which has been created especially to serve Canadians?

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. member for Mackenzie rising on a supplementary question?

Mr. Korchinski: I have a question for the Minister of Labour.

Mr. Speaker: I will recognize the hon. member in due course. We are still on the first question and have not completed the first round of questioning yet. The hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings on a supplementary.

OLD AGE SECURITY—STEPS TO CHECK INFLATION

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister. As the rise in the cost of living during the last month maintained the same rate as during the whole of last year, namely, 5 per cent, does the government intend to take positive steps to check this rapid inflation or does it not intend to?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I disagree once again with the figures put forth by the hon. member; they are not in accordance with the facts.

Mr. Hees: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Hon. members will appreciate that we have to go to another subject, important though this one may be. The hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings may ask a last supplementary and I will then go to the hon. member for York South on the next question.

Mr. Hees: As the figures I have quoted to the Prime Minister were produced by Statistics Canada, would he explain why he disagrees with his own government's agency?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for York South.

[*Mr. Fortin.*]

MANPOWER

APPOINTMENT OF ALLEGED LIBERAL PARTY OFFICIAL TO CARRY OUT STUDY IN WEST GERMANY

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the Acting Minister of Manpower and Immigration can now give us the details of the saga of Mr. Jean-Paul Lefebvre?

Hon. Martin P. O'Connell (Acting Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Jean-Paul Lefebvre, after consultation with the Department of Manpower and Immigration, was engaged on December 20, 1971, on a contractual basis by the government of Canada to carry out a study of the manpower policies and institutions of the Federal Republic of Germany and to draw to the attention of the government conclusions that might be useful in the Canadian federal system. The contract period ends on March 31, 1972. During the period Mr. Lefebvre will receive a fee of \$600 a week. He is also entitled to the usual travelling and living expenses provided under the public service travel directive and to a total amount not to exceed \$400 payable on the basis of actual expenses for secretarial services outside Ottawa. This remuneration is well within the standard range of short-term contracts. Mr. Lefebvre has been a total of 18 days in the Federal Republic of Germany and in Europe. He expects to meet the deadline provided in the contract.

Mr. Lewis: Can the acting minister inform the House of the basis on which the Federal Republic of Germany was selected as the place to study the manpower situation, particularly in view of the fact that West Germany has had full employment and employed two million to three million people from outside the country to fill vacancies in the labour market? In view of that situation, exactly what is Mr. Lefebvre studying in West Germany that would be useful to Canada?

Mr. O'Connell: The fact that there is no growth rate in the German economy and they have to import people is perhaps one of the reasons he is there, but the point the hon. gentleman misses is that it is a federal system and he is looking at manpower policies in a federal system of interest to Canada.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lewis: The federal system of West Germany is about as equal to the Canadian as this House of Commons is equal to the assembly in Tokyo.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Would the hon. member kindly ask his supplementary.

Mr. Lewis: What a comparison! May I ask the Acting Minister of Manpower and Immigration if he has found out whether Mr. Lefebvre had been on similar investigations when he was a Liberal member of the provincial legislature of Quebec? Did he go to Sweden and other places during the years he held an office in the Liberal party?