

Inquiries of the Ministry

House if the advisers on whose advice he made the very optimistic forecast shown in the budget papers tabled yesterday are the same advisers on whose advice the Prime Minister told us at the first of the year that inflation had been licked?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest to the hon. member that this kind of question serves no purpose at all. This is debate. The hon. member is not seeking information. I suggest that his question and the one asked previously along the same lines are not the kind of questions which can be recognized by the Chair. The hon. member might like to rephrase his question.

Mr. Hees: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. This is a very important matter, and the reason I asked the question is that the forecast made yesterday will have—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We have only 40 minutes. I allowed the hon. member to rephrase his original question. It might be much easier to proceed in this way than by raising a point of order.

Mr. Hees: I would then ask the minister whether these are the same gentlemen on whose advice he has made completely incorrect economic forecasts in every budget he has presented during the last three years?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest to the hon. member that this is not the kind of question which is procedurally acceptable.

UNEMPLOYMENT—DESIGNATION OF ONTARIO AS
DEPRESSED AREA

Mr. Max Saltsman (Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, since the Minister of Finance seemed somewhat reluctant to answer my previous question perhaps he will answer this one. As the figures indicate that the province of Ontario is not showing any improvement or reduction in unemployment and there is a considerable increase in unemployment over last year from May to May, will he indicate whether he intends to designate the province of Ontario as a depressed region?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, part of Ontario is designated as a depressed area.

[Translation]

UNEMPLOYMENT—REVIEW OF POLICY RESPECTING
DESIGNATED AREA

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member for Lotbinière wish to ask a supplementary?

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Yes, Mr. Speaker. I wish to direct a supplementary to the hon. Minister of Finance concerning the unemployment situation. In view of the fact that quite recently the Dominion Bureau of Statistics published the conclusions of a study by the Department of Manpower and Immigration to the effect that more than 152,000 workers have been unemployed for over seven months and in view of the fact that unemployment has become a continuing problem, I

[Mr. Hees.]

should like to ask the Minister of Finance whether the government intends to revise its economic expansion policy on designated areas in an effort to find an immediate solution to this problem which has already existed for too long?

[English]

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, if one looks at the figures which came out today he will see that a large part of the decrease in unemployment relates to people who had been unemployed for more than three months.

INCLUSION OF THOSE WORKING ON CENSUS IN TOTAL
EMPLOYMENT FIGURES

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Finance. Will the minister indicate to the House whether these total employment figures take into account those who were employed to work on the census?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I intended to rise on this matter and perhaps I might do so now. I should like to correct one aspect of the answer I gave on Tuesday in reply to a question by the hon. member for Sarnia-Lambton as to whether the May unemployment statistics were gathered before or after the census takers were hired. I had been informed by Statistics Canada that most of the people in question were hired after the reference week for the May labour force survey. However, Statistics Canada now informs me that this is not so. While actual work did not begin until after the reference week, training sessions were in fact held that week. Strictly speaking, therefore, those people would, by definition, be counted as employed. I also said on behalf of Statistics Canada that as these census takers were mostly housewives and students, most of them would not have been expected to be on the unemployment list. This is a fact and it is, of course, still valid.

An hon. Member: You can't get around it that way.

Mr. Pepin: Information Canada, for which I report faithfully, also says that the figures for the month of May are much greater than could possibly be accounted for by the census taking.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The minister is now making a statement. If he wishes to revert to motions for the purpose of making this kind of a statement he has the right to ask for permission, but I do feel that this is a statement rather than an answer to a question.

Mr. Hees: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, would it not be much easier to simply add 40,000 to the unemployment figures?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. May we have order. I believe the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate is rising on a question of privilege.