

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Stanfield: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I suggest to Your Honour, with all respect, that I am asking perfectly straight-forward questions which the minister is avoiding.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: I am pursuing these questions because four years ago the government covered up \$500 million.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Stanfield: What is the minister now trying to cover up?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Mackasey: Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. gentleman does not want to leave the impression that I am covering up anything.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mackasey: It might be useful to have the debate about which the hon. gentleman is talking, but I can recall his contribution several weeks ago—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I interrupted the Leader of the Opposition and I think I have to interrupt the minister. I suggest to both hon. members and to the House that this is debate. I have the impression there are questions that hon. members want to ask today and answers that ministers want to give. We should be given an opportunity to proceed.

Mr. Stanfield: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stanfield: I assure you, Sir, that I will not press the matter further in the House because there is no need to do so.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands.

Mr. Ryan: A supplementary question—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There is only one member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands and he has been recognized.

REQUEST THAT REGULATIONS BE CHANGED TO ENABLE
PAYMENTS TO CERTAIN UNEMPLOYED IN B.C. FOREST
PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. Is the minister aware of the fact that the forest products industry in British Columbia is stamping all separation certificates as "due to labour dispute" despite the fact that the strike by the fallers was an illegal strike, the fallers have long since returned to work and men who are not now unemployed because of a shortage of logs are being denied unemploy-

[Mr. Speaker.]

ment insurance benefits to which they are entitled? Does the minister intend to make any change in the regulations to remove this injustice?

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, on the one hand I am being accused by the Official Opposition—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Answer the question.

Mr. Mackasey: I will answer the question—of adopting certain regulations that put into the hands of the poor more money than the opposition think these people should be getting. On the other hand I am being accused of passing regulations that deny others payments to which it is said they are entitled. I will certainly look into that situation, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. Will the minister advise the House when the government intends to inform the provinces of its plans for a winter works program for the forthcoming winter in view of the fact that unemployment is rising steadily?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps this question might be asked later. I doubt that it is a supplementary. It is of course, definitely related, but perhaps the Chair should recognize the hon. member later for that question.

REQUEST FOR REPORT ON CURRENT FINANCIAL STATE
OF ACCOUNT

Mr. S. Perry Ryan (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. Is there anything to prevent the minister from giving a full report on the current financial state of the unemployment insurance account? If there is nothing to prevent him, will the minister make such a report to the country immediately?

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): It is impossible to calculate precisely the revenues which the Unemployment Insurance Commission will receive.

Mr. Hees: The nearest million will do.

Mr. Mackasey: This is because the new law is so structured that the revenues from income tax, employer contributions and employee contributions will not be turned over to the department until next April at the end of the fiscal year. I thought everybody understood this. If they do not, I am quite prepared to answer any questions they wish to ask. If the rate of unemployment is under—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We shall return to this obviously interesting and important subject later. I think we should attempt to complete the first series of questions now. I shall return to the hon. member for Spadina and the hon. member for Hamilton West in a short while.