

Inquiries of the Ministry

whether the statements made by the Minister of Finance in the House the other day are the government's final answer with respect to coping with the unemployment situation or whether the government is giving any consideration to a program for young people throughout this winter similar to what was undertaken last summer, or some more useful undertakings? Is the government now prepared to consider seriously discussing with the provinces, and through them the municipalities, a winter works program inasmuch as it is not too late yet to implement such a program on the thesis that the public would prefer to pay people to work rather than pay people to be idle?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, in the sense that the Minister of Finance and the government are reviewing the economic situation constantly—they have from time to time, over the past weeks and past months, announced new measures and new changes in our budgetary and our fiscal and financial position—the position stated by the minister obviously is not final. The situation is constantly being studied and analysed and new measures have been announced over the past weeks and months. I cannot, of course, say that there will not be any more new measures. I cannot say today what they will be, if any, but I cannot say that the statement is final.

May I remind the leaders of both parties that I am pleased to see they are using the seasonally adjusted figures now when not so many months ago they were blaming me for using them and saying it was a fraud to use such figures. I hope they remember that in a few months.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I challenge the Prime Minister to show where I ever said it was a fraud to use the seasonally adjusted figures.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): The Prime Minister seems to want to argue about which figures to use, though this is not of much concern to those who are unemployed. Since the programs put into operation by the government have not been very effective in reducing unemployment, will the right hon. gentlemen tell the House when the government, following its review, will be prepared to make some statement as to the additional measures they propose taking to grapple with this serious question?

Mr. Trudeau: No, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Finance made a statement the day before yesterday and I do not expect he will want to make another the day after tomorrow.

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): As the figures on unemployment produced today make it clear that whatever steps the government is taking to stimulate the economy are not having the desired effect, will the right hon. gentleman and his friends now give serious

[Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands).]

consideration to the positive measures which have been put forward by the opposition to revive the economy and stimulate employment?

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have the impression that the question as asked is somewhat in the form of an argument and I doubt whether it is acceptable.

Mr. Hees: May I ask a supplementary question, then? I shall be glad to send the Prime Minister a list of the measures the opposition have advocated to stimulate the economy so he will be aware of these proposals. Since it appears impossible to get any positive statement of policy from the government in the House, will the Prime Minister consider debating this important matter in the near future on a public platform at a time and place of his own choosing so that we can get down to actual cases?

Mr. Trudeau: I am very disappointed to see the hon. member downgrading Parliament in this way.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

POSSIBLE EXPORT OF ARMS BY BRITAIN TO SOUTH AFRICA—EFFECT ON ATTENDANCE AT COMMONWEALTH PRIME MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs or perhaps to the Prime Minister. Has the government received representations or information indicating that certain of the Commonwealth governments might be unwilling to attend the forthcoming Commonwealth Prime Minister's Conference—I believe it is to take place in Singapore—if the British government proceeds with the export of military arms to South Africa?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): The only information I have received on this subject is probably the same as has been received by the hon. member for Greenwood. I would suggest, however, that the conference should go ahead if only to enable the members of the Commonwealth to express their views to the British government and to one another on this important subject.

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[Translation]

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

INAPPROPRIATE ADVERTISING ON CHILDREN'S TELEVISION PROGRAMS

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Could the minister tell us if he has received protest letters from some parents against noisy television advertising directed at children and if he intends to take steps to prevent it?