

*Oral Questions*CABINET SOLIDARITY RESPECTING STATEMENTS MADE AFTER  
CABINET MEETINGS

**Mr. James Gillies (Don Valley):** I wish to put a question to the right hon. Prime Minister. Given the fact that there is so much concern about respect for parliament and the responsibility of cabinet, does he think it is appropriate for a minister to speculate on a question of this sort right outside a cabinet meeting since he just came out of cabinet? Where does the principle of cabinet solidarity lie? Whom is one to believe when trying to understand what government policy is?

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, some ministers have been accused of not being sufficiently communicative and not speaking enough to the press. If the press would stay away from the cabinet door and not ask minister any questions, then, obviously, they will not get any answers. If they do get answers and then correct them, we should not blame the minister; we should just say he was misquoted.

**Mr. Gillies:** Again I ask the right hon. Prime Minister a question in all seriousness, because everyone in the country is concerned about parliament and its role in the country, the cabinet and its role in the country and the responsibility of all of us as parliamentarians.

I happened to listen to the tape, and there is no question that the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce said it is highly probable that interest rates in Canada will go up. He was speaking as a minister of the Crown. The problem with economic management in this country today is one of credibility, of uncertainty, of confused statements.

Surely the Prime Minister believes this is a serious matter which should be dealt with in some way. Can he give us some assurance that we can have a position stated by the government that the Minister of Finance will make statements on economic policy, and we will not have these ad hoc statements from irresponsible ministers which cause so much confusion around the country?

**Mr. Trudeau:** That is a reasonable request. I can give the undertaking that the Minister of Finance, or myself, will be making statements on this matter, and that the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce will not.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. However, since she has just stepped out of the chamber, may I pursue it when she returns?

[Mr. Trudeau.]

[Translation]

## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

INQUIRY WHETHER GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERING  
RESCINDING SECTION 57 OF THE LEGISLATION

**Mr. C. A. Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration concerning the question I put to him on October 31 about that notorious section 57 of the regulations under the Unemployment Insurance Act. I have to raise it again on account of the numerous letters of rejection from workers in my constituency. I have now almost 100 and the authorities of the office have much difficulty enforcing that section because when they would like to do justice to those workers they are prevented from doing so by that provision. I merely wish—besides the minister promised the other day to consider the case and try to correct that difficulty—to ask the minister whether he has made some progress in that connection?

● (1122)

[English]

**Mr. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, there was progress to the extent that I checked out the representation made by the hon. member. Prior to 1967 there was a provision whereby agricultural workers could be exempted by doing it on a voluntary basis. As a result of that, there was more confusion and more difficulty administering the plan from the standpoint of the employee, the employer and the government. So that particular change was made in 1971 at the request of many organizations, including the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question.

I wonder why in all other industries a worker who has completed a week is entitled to a week of unemployment insurance while an agricultural worker is not. As a supplementary, I would also like to ask him the following: I am told that under the section he cannot earn over \$280 or \$285, I do not have the section in hand, but he has to earn less than a certain amount to be exempted from unemployment insurance. Could the minister tell us if for example a worker earns \$300 he is entitled to unemployment insurance whatever may be the number of weeks or days even if he has not completed 25 days?

[English]

**Mr. Cullen:** Mr. Speaker, the legislation regarding payment of benefit to agricultural workers is the same as that for other workers. I do not think that in the time allotted to me in the question period I can answer all the questions put by the hon. member; but I will undertake to write to him and give him a full précis of what the law is and how it is applied.