

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Trudeau: Not only will I consider it, Mr. Speaker, but I have indeed acted on it. More than a month ago I wrote to every province suggesting a meeting of the provincial premiers and myself as early in the fall as possible, this time to discuss not constitutional but economic matters and others which might be of interest to them. Although up to this stage I have proposed three or four dates, I must say I have not yet been able to get agreement from the provinces to meet with the federal government at any time. I am still hoping to work out a date for such a meeting.

Mr. Forrestall: Have they no confidence—

Mr. Trudeau: What is your problem over there?

Mr. Forrestall: Have they no confidence in you?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Trudeau: They cannot on the one hand suggest that I meet with them and then on the other suggest that they do not want to meet with me.

*[Translation]*UNEMPLOYMENT INCREASE AMONG THOSE UNDER 24—
STUDY OF REASONS

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Prime Minister.

He stated a moment ago that he was very upset by the fact that those who are especially affected by the high rate of unemployment in Canada were under 24 years of age. He also said that the causes of unemployment among those workers were being investigated.

Could the Prime Minister say whether those studies are under way. If not, what would they deal with?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I would not have the hon. member conclude that very lengthy major studies are being carried out. I gave that reply to a question put to me a short while ago, i.e. that the figures had reached us this morning only and that we were analysing them. So the hon. member should not assume that this analysis will involve very long deep studies.

Mr. Fortin: I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

The right hon. Prime Minister's reply would seem to indicate that studies will not last very long, because the government possesses quite a lot of the information required. In that case, is the right hon. Prime Minister in a position to indicate whether concrete, positive action is to be taken in the light of information available to him concerning the unemployment of that group of workers?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the problem is indeed quite simple. It is a matter of finding out why young people age 14 to 24 have, between the end of July and the beginning of August, left the labour force at a slower rate than in previous years. As the hon. member can see, the question is very simple. Perhaps he could come up with a very simple explanation as an answer? If so, he should provide us with it so that our studies would be all the shorter.

*[English]*UNEMPLOYMENT—IMMEDIATE AMENDMENT OF CANADA
ASSISTANCE PLAN TO HELP PROVINCES AND CITIES
MEET WELFARE COSTS

Mr. S. Perry Ryan (Spadina): I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister. As the unemployment burden will likely be at least as great as last year and in view of the fact that the new Unemployment Insurance Commission access reforms will not help this winter, at least for the majority of the winter, is the government going to introduce immediate reforms in the Canada Assistance Plan to help the poorer provinces and the larger cities finance their added welfare costs this winter?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): As I answered a previous question, Mr. Speaker, I have suggested meetings with all the provinces to discuss this whole situation. I cannot answer the member's question until I know what the point of view of the provinces is on this matter.

Mr. Ryan: Will the government bring in its family income security plan for second reading now instead of postponing it until perhaps next May?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, if the opposition will help us pass the taxation bill now, the government will be able to do that.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Prime Minister with regard to the economy and the prospects this winter. Inasmuch as the Minister of Finance has been consistently wrong in his predictions about the economy and its growth, will the Prime Minister, in his quest for some ways and means of solving this situation, try doing this through another Minister of Finance?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

UNEMPLOYMENT INCREASE—ACTION TO ACCELERATE
PAYMENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): My supplementary is for the Minister of Labour. Will the minister use his good offices with the Unemployment Insurance Commission to try to persuade them to disentangle the increasing administrative mess that has existed there, particularly with the greater rate of unemployment of the past two months or so, so that those who are unemployed can at least get their unemployment insurance benefits without having to wait for months?

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member has any specific cases in mind I would be very pleased to intervene personally. The latest statistics that I was given the other day by the Unemployment