

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Douglas: I wonder if the attention of the Prime Minister has been drawn to the statement of Mr. Michael Fenwick, who is a member of the Toronto advisory committee on manpower training, to the effect that the number of cases referred by the manpower department has dropped from 2,000 in the month of April to 500 in the month of September and that two of the training centres, Riverdale and Castle Frank have been closed.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member should ask a question.

Mr. Douglas: My question of the Prime Minister is, in view of the closing of these training centres and the decline in the referrals, would the Prime Minister consider that these training centres ought to be opened and the program expanded since it seems to be contracting?

Mr. Pearson: Apparently my hon. friend's information about the alleged decline has been gathered from newspaper reports, but I would be glad to look into the matter.

Mr. R. W. Prittie (Burnaby-Richmond): On the subject of unemployment, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister or the Minister of Labour. When can we expect some action to raise the present level of unemployment insurance?

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, the matter is still receiving consideration. I expressed the hope that the house would be able to deal with the matter before the adjournment at Christmas. I can give no definite assurance. It depends upon the progress that is made with other legislation.

[Translation]

[Later:]

Hon. Théogène Ricard (Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, I would like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Could he tell the house if the government has taken action to provide alternative employment to the people who are out of work because of the shutdown, some time ago, of the Louiseville Shirt Company, due to massive imports of clothing from Asiatic countries?

Mr. Speaker: I wonder if the hon. member would consider the possibility of discussing this matter during the adjournment debate?

[Mr. Pearson.]

Mr. Ricard: Mr. Speaker, Your Honour mentioned, a few moments ago, that only specific facts should be stated. Now, it seems to me that this is a very specific fact and that the matter should be considered by the Prime Minister. Or perhaps I could put a supplementary question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce and ask him whether he is ready to assure the house that action will be taken so that other Canadian manufacturers will not be compelled to close down for the same reasons?

[English]

Hon. Robert Winters (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, we will look at this matter within the framework of our over-all economic policies.

COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

RHODESIA—PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO CANADA ON RECENT TALKS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Revelstoke): My question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In the light of the leading role played by Canada in commonwealth relations with Rhodesia, is Canada being kept informed of the talks between Mr. Ian Smith and the British commonwealth secretary, Mr. George Thomson?

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): I regret that I did not hear my hon. friend's question, though I did my best. If he would speak into the microphone rather than away from it, that might help.

Mr. Johnston: I will repeat my question, Mr. Speaker. In the light of the leading role played by Canada in commonwealth relations with Rhodesia, is Canada being kept informed of the progress of talks between Mr. Ian Smith and British commonwealth secretary, Mr. George Thomson?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Yes, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE

QUEBEC—INQUIRY AS TO ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Roland Godin (Portneuf): Mr. Speaker, my question was for the hon. Minister of Agriculture, but in his absence I will direct it to his parliamentary secretary.