

the government report comes in, if it is going to require further study,—which means during the summer months—given the whole social and environmental aspect of the question that Mr. Justice Berger referred to in his report yesterday with specific reference to Alcan, would the minister not conclude on a rational basis and in terms of commitment to the people of Canada that it is impossible to reach a sensible decision on this prior to September 1?

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is apparently prepared to prejudge all the questions.

Mr. Broadbent: You are prejudging.

Mr. Gillespie: Indeed you have. You have already prejudged virtually every issue related to this very difficult decision. The government's position is that the National Energy Board has been hearing evidence for many years and we expect to receive their report this summer. We will take our decision after we have seen that report.

Mr. Broadbent: After parliament has gone home.

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[Translation]

STATISTICS CANADA

METHOD OF CALCULATING NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED— GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

In view of the fact that Statistics Canada is responsible for counting the number of unemployed in Canada, and that the Minister of Manpower and Immigration takes into account the data provided by Statistics Canada when computing the amounts to be made available to the various constituencies under the Canada Works Program, could the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce tell the House whether he is willing to suggest more effective and adequate means to compute the real number of unemployed in the various regions, so that the Minister of Manpower and Immigration can truly assess the needs of all regions and deal fairly with them?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, Statistics Canada has assured me on a number of occasions that no better method exists today for computing the number of unemployed than those it is currently using. These methods are internationally recognized and used, but if the hon. member has concrete suggestions to make to the House to improve the current system, I shall consider them gladly and refer them to Statistics Canada.

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): I wish to ask a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

It is the first time that a member of the cabinet invites me so openly to make suggestions to help him in his work.

Oral Questions

In view of the minister's answer, may I ask him whether he wants me to submit such suggestions orally or in writing and whether he is prepared to consider them?

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, of course I will be prepared to consider them and I would be glad to meet the hon. member. If he wishes to see me, I am always available.

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[English]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

UNEMPLOYMENT—GOVERNMENT'S KNOWLEDGE OF NUMBER OF JOBS NEEDED

Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister. In view of his statement that 110,000 jobs have been created in past months, would he indicate if he was aware of the fact that 240,000 people actually came into the Canadian labour force in the past 12 months. This means that approximately one job was created for every two people looking for work in the past year. If the minister was aware of that may I ask if the government did not take into consideration the fact that jobs had to be created for 240,000 people, not just the 110,000 for which he takes credit.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we are all aware that one of the problems we have faced over the past several months has been the rapid increase in the Canadian labour force.

UNEMPLOYMENT—POSSIBILITY OF DEBATE ON SITUATION IN CANADA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe): In view of the fact that there were 9,000 fewer jobs in April than in March and in view of the findings of the economic conference in London which has declared the unemployment situation in Canada and the other six countries as a *cause célèbre*, I have a supplementary question. Mr. Speaker, would the Acting Prime Minister indicate if there will be a statement on motions or if any other means will be taken to ensure a review of the conference in this House and, if necessary, a debate on current unemployment not only in Canada but in the other six countries?

● (1430)

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have no plans to arrange an early debate on unemployment. I have been asked to arrange debates on northern pipelines and national unity. I believe that the subject of unemployment, so important to all of us, could be appropriately set down for the allotted day debate which is to take place on Friday this week.