

tary to the Minister of Labour about the new Unemployment Insurance Commission offices. In view of the fact that some cities, such as Saint John, New Brunswick, will have a serious reduction of staff, when will the minister be making a formal announcement so that we may judge whether some of these reductions will bring about a very serious decrease in facilities for the public?

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I do intend to make a full report in a few weeks time. Proof of the fact that re-organization will be done on a non-political basis is the fact that there will be an office in the riding of the hon. gentleman who raised the question earlier.

Mr. Bell: Will the minister give an assurance that there will not be any changes or transfers of staff until the announcement is made?

Mr. Mackasey: I cannot give the assurance that there will be no change in staff, Mr. Speaker, but I can give the hon. gentleman the assurance that the UIC staff is being kept informed through its representatives in the trade unions and every protection is being given to the present staff. There will be no diminution in the size of the staff but it would be naïve to assume that there will not be some disruption. We will expect some of the staff, in light of our desire to make our service more effective, to accept movement from one office to another.

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Labour. In the absence of the Prime Minister, would he use all his influence on his cabinet colleagues to give the unemployment situation in this country top priority inasmuch as he can substantiate his argument very well by the fact that he has announced the opening of 65 new unemployment insurance offices across the country?

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

STEPS TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO PERSONS WITHOUT BENEFITS

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): I have a question for the Minister of Labour, Mr. Speaker. Last Thursday I asked the minister if he would announce at the latest by Tuesday what plans, if any, the government intends to implement to compensate for the cessation of seasonal unemployment insurance benefits and he said he would have something to announce by Tuesday. He will not be in the House tomorrow so I wonder whether he is prepared to say something today or will he be prepared to make an announcement on Wednesday?

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Labour): I should prefer to make it on Wednesday, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. gentleman has no objection in view of the fact that he first brought the question to the attention of the House.

Inquiries of the Ministry

NUMBER OUT OF WORK MORE THAN FOUR MONTHS WHO ARE RECEIVING BENEFITS

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): I should like to ask a supplementary question of the Minister of Labour. When the minister makes his statement with regard to unemployment insurance, would he give the House an estimate of the proportion of the massive number of 348,000 Canadians reported to have been out of work for more than four months as of the middle of April who receive unemployment insurance benefits and those to whom such benefits are not available?

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Labour): I shall try to be as factual as possible on Wednesday when I make the statement, Mr. Speaker.

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MANPOWER

SUGGESTED TRANSFER OF STAFF FROM IMMIGRATION TO MANPOWER

Mr. A. D. Hales (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, may I direct my question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In view of the great number of people seeking employment through manpower offices across Canada and in view of the decline in the number of immigrants coming to Canada, which means less work and overstaffing in the immigration offices, does the minister intend to transfer some staff from immigration to manpower offices to help with the extremely heavy load in those offices?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, we are, of course, constantly examining the best location of the staff available to the department as a whole. Although there has been some decline in applications for immigration, this certainly has in no way reduced the load to the point where we can seriously consider reducing staff to any significant extent.

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COMMUNICATIONS

ACTION ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Minister of Communications. Since it is several weeks since the former Minister of Communications tabled the telecommunications report, can the minister inform the House what is happening and what action is to be taken with regard to that report?

[Translation]

Hon. Gérard Pelletier (Secretary of State): The telecommunications report, Mr. Speaker, will be discussed at various levels and especially with the provinces, in the very near future.