

Inquiries of the Ministry

ness as it should and should not be allotted any further funds?

Mr. Pepin: I will gladly look into this, Mr. Speaker.

[*Translation*]

LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM—SUGGESTION THAT MUNICIPALITIES SELECT PROJECTS—DISCUSSION BETWEEN FEDERAL AND MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the right hon. Prime Minister in view of the absence of the Secretary of State.

With regard to the Opportunities for Youth program or the Local Initiatives program, does the government intend to allow municipalities to select their projects or will the selection continue to be made here in Ottawa or in Montreal? Have arrangements been made to consult the municipalities involved which know their own needs very well?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I believe the question of the hon. member applies to the Local Initiatives Program. The minister in charge is here in the House; the hon. member may wish to direct the question to him.

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I asked the question with regard to LIP, but I would not want the minister to overlook the Opportunities for Youth projects which interest municipalities.

Can the Minister of Manpower and Immigration tell us whether, in the future, the government or the officials of his department intend to consult the municipalities when time comes to grant subsidies for LIP projects?

[*English*]

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, because we are very sensitive about the rights of the provinces, our dialogue and communications with the municipalities during the winter took place through the provincial authorities. In other words, a sum of money was placed at the disposal of the provinces to be allocated according to their criteria to specific municipalities within the provinces.

• (1500)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a supplementary.

I understand the minister's explanation that municipalities must obtain the province's approval but since provincial authorities always reply: Yes, your project has been accepted; it is now up to Ottawa to say yes or no, could the minister tell us if Ottawa is in a position to consult the municipalities involved?

[*English*]

Mr. Mackasey: What I did was to announce some weeks ago that projects of the type the hon. gentleman is describing so aptly could be extended until the middle of June because of the red tape that had been synonymous with municipal programs. In other words, these projects can be continued beyond the end of May until the middle

[Mr. Lewis.]

of June or even slightly beyond that time in order that they may be completed.

REASONS FOR LOWER PARTICIPATION RATE OF YOUTH IN LABOUR FORCE—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, in view of the report today by Statistics Canada that there has been a smaller than usual increase in the participation rate of those under the age of 24 but still a quarter of a million young people looking for work, and as this was before those in institutions of higher education came into the labour force, I wonder whether the Prime Minister has made any inquiries or whether any inquiries will be initiated by the government to see whether the reason for this lower participation rate is that young people have dropped out of the labour force and may now be enlarging the welfare rolls in various provinces?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, that may be one explanation of the erratic figures in the participation rate, but I believe that various ministers have stated at different times that the participation rate is moving with a great deal of inconsistency at present, and we are trying to find the explanations for that. I understand that even certain forecasting circles are refusing to forecast the rate of unemployment because of the erratic nature of the participation rate. We are trying to find the answer to the very helpful suggestions of the hon. member.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): About eight weeks ago when there was a larger than usual increase, the Prime Minister gave me a somewhat similar answer and suggested at that time that the whole problem was being examined in some detail—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps we should try to limit the length of questions. The question period started some ten minutes ago, and I believe we have had only three questions. If we have lengthy questions, many of our colleagues will be left on the sidelines.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): Can the Prime Minister indicate when we may have specific answers with regard to this continuing problem, and second, whether or not special action is being taken by the manpower counselling office set up for young people in the last few weeks?

Mr. Trudeau: In answer to the first part of the question, discussions have taken place between various officials and officials of Statistics Canada in order perhaps to arrive with greater precision at the real unemployment figure and to gain more knowledge of the participation rate. I do not think that the results of those discussions are apparent yet in any conclusions.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): In connection with the second part of that question, may I direct a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration who might indicate whether, in view of the still very large number of over a quarter of a million unemployed young people, special action is being taken by his department to deal with this very serious problem?