

Employment Programs

remarks with the unanimous consent of the House. I assumed, having in mind the comment made a moment ago, that the hon. member for Renfrew North (Mr. Hopkins) had come to the conclusion of his remarks and that is why I called on the hon. member for Winnipeg North.

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Speaker, when I listened to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Lang) extolling this afternoon the good conditions which exist in this country, I wondered in what never-never land he has been living. It is obvious, in light of the heaviest unemployment this country has seen for more than ten years, that when the minister asserts this country is doing well, he is simply ignoring the facts. I feel rather sorry for the minister and cannot help remembering that he is one of those members who, among several others, was elected by a small plurality of votes in the last election.

I hope that he has simply taken leave of absence from his former position as dean of the law school of the University of Saskatchewan because I feel, in view of the government's inability to deal with unemployment and the problems of western farmers, that when the next election takes place the minister will be back in Saskatchewan, hopefully as dean of the faculty of law at the University of Saskatchewan.

In April of this year, the last month for which we have figures, 659,000 people were unemployed, compared with 544,000 during the same month in 1970. That represents 6.7 per cent of the labour force calculated on a seasonally adjusted basis, and 7.8 per cent calculated in actual terms. In April, 1971, unemployment in the Maritimes rose to 75,000 from 66,000 in April, 1970. In Quebec, unemployment rose to 234,000, compared with 203,000 in April, 1970.

An hon. Member: Somebody else has used the same figures.

Mr. Orlikow: I hear an hon. member interjecting that another hon. member used the same figures. I would think that a party with the heavy representation from the province of Quebec which the government party enjoys would be very concerned about there being so much unemployment in Quebec in April, 1971. In Ontario, unemployment rose from 145,000 in April, 1970, to 205,000 in April of this year. In British Columbia, unemployment rose from 58,000 in April of last year to 72,000 in April of this year. In the Prairie provinces it rose fractionally, from 72,000 in April, 1970, to 73,000 in April of this year.

The motion before the House speaks of the deep concern of Canadians that the government's policies are failing to give young Canadians the opportunity to get jobs. If one looks at the statistics in the labour force survey from which I have quoted, one will see that the unemployment situation in respect of young people is desperate. One can see how much more acute the worsening economic outlook has made the problem faced by Canada's young people.

The figures show that in April, 1971, 130,000 people between the ages of 14 and 19 were unemployed, compared with 111,000 in April of the previous year. In

[Mr. Speaker.]

April, 1971, 151,000 young people between the ages of 20 and 24 were unemployed, compared with 113,000 in April the year before. Is it any wonder that the people of Canada are incensed? Is it any wonder that a traditionally Liberal constituency like Brant went over to the NDP in the by-election held on Monday of this week? Is it any wonder that the constituency of Trois-Rivières was saved by a hair from going Social Credit in another by-election held last Monday?

The problem of employment for our young people will get much worse before it gets better. Dr. W. R. Dymond, an economist at the University of Ottawa and a former deputy minister in the Department of Manpower and Immigration, has put together an easily verifiable set of figures which make it clear that unemployment will not normalize as the economy revives. According to an article which I have in my hand, he said:

In particular, youth unemployment seems fated to be a continuing problem unless direct and concrete policies to combat it are pursued.

He brings forward immense and interesting statistics.

Between 1960 and 1970, Canada has experienced an 11 per cent increase in unemployment over all age groups. But the age group 14 to 19 years has experienced a 43 per cent increase in unemployment; for 20-24 year olds, the comparable increase is 49 per cent.

Dr. Dymond points out, as reported in the article:

In 1960, 1,400,000 Canadian workers were between the ages of 14 and 24. By 1970, that number had risen to more than 2,000,000.

● (8:20 p.m.)

Not only are there more young Canadians looking for work, there are more better-educated young Canadians looking for work. The combined rate of increase of post-secondary graduations—that means including community colleges and technical schools—has been of the order of 450 per cent.

In addition to this, Dymond points out that the increase in professional and technical immigrants has been about 360 per cent over the decade.

We know the plight of students who need to work this summer if they are to return to school, university or community college next fall. We know that a large percentage of the close to one million who will look for jobs will not find a job or will get one for half or less than that of the time they have off between school terms. We know the tragedies being created every day by the failure of the government to firm-up its plans for student employment this summer until a time just over a month ago, so that many who were counting on government programs still do not know today, June 3, whether the projects from which they hope to get work will be approved. That is a disgrace. The delay in planning and decision-making by the government can only be characterized as criminal.

We have to face an even more serious problem. University graduates looking for permanent work are having difficulties which we have not had in this country since the hungry 1930s. The president of the Chemical Institute of Canada reported last week that over 50 per cent of the graduate engineers completing their courses this year have so far been unable to find work. Dr. Dymond dealt