

Government Administrative Policies

ment policy. The transcript of the hearing of April 28 shows that I discussed this matter with the Deputy Minister and his officials. I have no quarrel personally with individuals in the department, but I think their policies are wrong and in some cases I think the interpretation of them is far too restrictive. One example is national standards for certain categories. Mr. Speaker, we have no national standards. We cannot fit people from Vancouver to St. John's, Newfoundland, in the same slot, though that seems to be the practical result.

Then we have the heartbreaking situation, which I think should be reviewed, of people allowed to come into the country on a visa and then having them apply for landed immigrant status. They may have already landed a job, or in some cases may be working surreptitiously and doing quite well, but they do not qualify for the 50 points. Surely they should be entitled to an appeal. A sponsor of an immigrant who is still abroad cannot appeal an assessment. It seems to me that if a man is here and has a bona fide disagreement with the assessing officer, he should have a right to appeal without having to go through the procedure of a special inquiry making a deportation order and then going before the appeal board, with the deportation order being reissued. I know the Deputy Minister has indicated that there may be a study made with a view to altering this procedure, and I hope the department comes up with a fast answer. The officials indicated that there were almost 2,000 appeals pending before the immigration appeal board and that despite its Trojan efforts it is falling behind in this respect.

The mere fact that there are almost 2,000 appeals against the points assessment indicates that something is wrong. We get the situation of an individual who is already here, appealing to the immigration appeal board and having to wait 18 months or two years for a decision. On the information that has been disclosed, there does not seem to be any hope of improvement at the present time unless there is a wholesale reassessment of the system. I do not think the answer lies in doubling or trebling the size of the board. I suggest that the answer lies in having a simpler appeal procedure without the indignity of going through deportation proceedings. It is for that reason that I withhold my consent to these items.

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance):
Mr. Speaker, I should like to say a few words
[Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West).]

about questions which were raised by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) and the leader of the New Democratic Party this afternoon concerning unemployment and the economic situation in Canada. We as Liberals are very unhappy that the rate of unemployment is high in Canada at the present time. In fact, it is almost up to the lowest level that was attained during the period of the former Tory government, and it is at the highest level since we formed a Liberal government in 1963. I should like to say a few words about the unemployment situation—

An hon. Member: You didn't inherit it, as we did.

Mr. Benson: The number of workers with jobs increased sharply during May. The seasonally adjusted increase of 63,000 jobs represented a rise of 10 per cent at annual rates over the previous month. This compares with an average increase in employment during the 1960's of just under 4 per cent. It was, therefore, more than twice the average rate of employment growth during the last decade. This growth might have been even larger if it had not been for the effect of strikes in British Columbia and Quebec which I will mention later.

Seasonally adjusted, the labour force increased at a still faster pace. It rose by 1.4 per cent—118,000 persons—in May over April. This is a considerably larger increase than has taken place in any month since 1953. This increase of 1.4 per cent in the size of the labour force, seasonally adjusted, compares with an average increase in May between 1953 and 1969 of .2 per cent and the previous increase in the labour force last month is seven times larger than the average 1953-1969 increase of May.

Despite the substantial increase in employment in May, the even more extraordinary increase in the labour force resulted in an increase in unemployment of 55,000 persons on a seasonally adjusted basis. This, of course, includes students coming into the labour force. Almost half of the increase in the labour force, 58,000, involved those in the 29 to 24-year age group. In this age group, 27,000 of the increase remained unemployed, accounting for half the total increase in unemployment of 55,000 on a seasonally adjusted basis. It may well be that a number of these persons were students unable to find work. The increase of 58,000 in this age group is exceptionally large; it is nearly three times