

*Speech from the Throne*

the need for employment growth during the decade. I repeat, Mr. Speaker, that these projections show that Canada was far ahead of all other industrial countries in the need for employment growth during the decade. Between 1970 and 1975 Canada's needed employment growth was estimated at 15 per cent compared with only 9 per cent for the United States and no more than 5 per cent for any other country. Obviously, then, other countries in the 1970s do not need to aim as high in employment growth as does Canada because their labour forces are not growing as fast. This is the point that I believe the Prime Minister deliberately missed. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's pleasure at Canada's employment growth rate is rather hollow and meaningless.

• (1230)

Of more relevance is another figure, the ratio of unemployed people to vacancies in various countries. The most recent figures in this regard are for the third quarter of 1971. They show that in the European countries the Prime Minister referred to in his reply to the Leader of the Opposition, being Belgium, France, Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom but excluding Italy for which there were no job vacancy figures, there is a vast difference in the competition for available jobs. In these European countries there were only 1.3 unemployed persons competing for each vacant job whereas in Canada at the same time there were 10.6 unemployed persons competing for each vacant job. Quite a difference in this regard.

There is another way to view the Trudeau employment record, and that is by comparing the rate of growth of employment, the rate of growth of the labour force, and employment rates during the Trudeau years with the records of previous Canadian governments. There were several years in the pre-Trudeau era which managed a higher rate of employment growth and a lower unemployment rate even when the labour force was growing faster than today.

I refer you to the year 1966, Mr. Speaker, when we had an annual increase in the labour force of 3.9 per cent and an annual increase in employment of 4.2 per cent and an unemployment rate of 3.6 per cent. So we see that in 1966 Canada's employment growth was faster than anything in the Trudeau years. In spite of the fact that her labour force grew faster than in any year since, the unemployment rate was lower than any annual rate the Trudeau government has been able to show.

Rather than look at all these facts and at Canada's 665,000 unemployed, the Prime Minister prefers to tell the nation that every cloud has its silver lining. Why do the unemployment figures matter, he implies, when Canada's international record in employment growth from 1965 to 1970 is unsurpassed?

More than this, the Prime Minister has recently been repeatedly telling the unemployed that jobs are available but they are too lazy to get them. The great mining centres of Canada such as Sudbury, he says, are crying for workers. The fact that INCO has been planning and carrying out lay-offs for several months has done little to dampen his enthusiasm for this approach to the unemployment problem. The Prime Minister and his advisers, before he visits and insults the unemployed in this manner, at least

[Mr. Alexander.]

in Ontario, should read the recently released report of the Ontario task force on employment opportunities for welfare recipients, especially page 67 where it is stated:

There is comparatively large-scale unemployment now affecting all areas of the province, if not to the same extent elsewhere, to the extent that no area has a shortage of labour.

Sincerely, Mr. Speaker, Canadians have heard enough of the Trudeau government's misleading figures and its excuses.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Alexander:** Canadians need and want a comprehensive set of policies to deal with the problem, not a re-run of the old rhetoric that tries to sweep the problem under the rug and away from the government's hands. "Out of sight, out of mind" seems to be the Trudeau government philosophy toward unemployment.

I understand that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) wants to speak immediately after me. Perhaps he will give some indication of the industrial policy that the government intends to implement in order that we can have economic growth and full employment. I should like to hear what the Minister of Finance has to say about full employment. As I said, "out of sight, out of mind" seems to be the Trudeau government philosophy toward unemployment and every statement in the throne speech is dedicated to that end.

The present Canadian ills of high unemployment and rising prices are the products of the anaemic and petty economic policies of the Trudeau government. The issue now is whether those policies are changing. I do not believe they are.

I know that the Minister of Finance is waiting most anxiously to state the direction in which this great country should be pointed under the present regime and we are waiting with bated breath for his speech. I know that the former Minister of Justice in his new position as Minister of Finance will display the same compassion and the same humanitarian feeling toward the Canadian people as he has in the past.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Alexander:** This is what we are talking about—people. I know the Minister of Finance is concerned and what he has to say to us this afternoon will be on the record for the edification of all of us. I hope the recent change in the finance portfolio is of some significance.

I should like to tell the minister of a meeting I attended in the city of Hamilton not too long ago. I hope other members will have the same sort of meeting because I found it most gratifying, informative and interesting. The labour community was invited but unfortunately did not see fit to attend. If we want to move toward some co-operation, negotiation and understanding between labour, business, government and management, I am at a loss to understand why labour did not attend.

The businessmen were concerned because they were being bombarded by an excessive amount of legislation that, as they said, left them no time to run their businesses. They placed great emphasis on the tax bill which was recently implemented by closure; they also placed great emphasis on the competition bill and its dire effects,