

Supply—Finance

Mr. Martin (Essex East): On the basis of those in need.

Mr. Diefenbaker: He always does this when he finds himself being tied up by his own statistics, when not from his own bureau. He immediately becomes excited. I wanted to prove from the record exactly what was said. I read from page 7733 of *Hansard*:

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I made a statement as to the unemployed in June, 1957, and the Prime Minister now, in an effort to show that that was a wrong statement is quoting from the N.E.S. figures, which are not the figures on which I am relying, which he realizes. In order to be fair the Prime Minister ought to quote from the—

Then there are some interruptions, and I am reported as having said:

Mr. Chairman, I know the hon. gentleman's great powers, but he does not yet know what I am going to read, although his powers of perception in this case indicate that he is afraid of the facts. Registration for employment at any N.E.S. offices—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): How about persons without jobs?

Mr. Diefenbaker: —totalled about 267,000. I simply wanted to place on the record—

This indicates very clearly that the national employment service figures, when they do not meet the needs of the hon. gentleman, become unreliable. What we are going to try to achieve, and this was suggested along with others by the Leader of the Opposition, is a full and complete investigation into the matter to the end that Canadians would know the position of unemployment. They asked for one standard measurement of unemployment so that never again would we find ourselves quoting one set of figures on one side of the house and another set of figures on the other side of the house. Having set up the committee, and the committee having reported on August 8, the hon. gentleman becomes greatly aroused—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Because of the rights of parliament.

Mr. Diefenbaker: —because of his fears. What are those fears? The only fear he could possibly have is that when a true basis is achieved for measuring unemployment he will see that his figures have been grossly exaggerated. I am glad of this opportunity. I would not have been able to refer to the national employment service figures, and the differences between him and me, had he not seen fit to introduce this subject.

While we are dealing with unemployment, may I point out a few things. In so far as unemployment is concerned, much has been made of the degree to which he and his hon. friends would meet this problem and met it. Well, here is the record.

(Mr. Diefenbaker.)

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Let us discuss the issue.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Chairman, the louder and more contentious the babble, the more certain the fear on the part of those doing battle. The hon. member does not want these figures placed on record. In June, 1936, unemployment amounted to 12.8 per cent; in June, 1937 to 9.1 per cent—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. If we are going to have a general debate on unemployment, then we welcome that discussion right now. What we are discussing now is whether this parliament is going to be given an opportunity before any changes are made, if they are to be made, of discussing the recommendations for those proposed changes. That is the issue. It is not the state of unemployment at the time of the Prime Minister's birth. What we are now discussing is that single question, and I would ask you to direct the Prime Minister's attention to that fact.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Chairman, I realize this is harrassing to the hon. member's soul, but I want to put the facts on the record because I have heard this repeated over and over again.

The Chairman: Order. I thought the Prime Minister was replying to the point of order raised by the hon. member for Essex East. I must say that by agreement it was arranged that the matter of the report on methods for measuring unemployment would be discussed on this item, but it was only by agreement. I do not think the whole question of unemployment should be discussed here because it would open up a very wide debate, too wide to meet with the agreement under which this matter is now being discussed.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Chairman, I would have thought that the hon. gentlemen, desiring the true figures, would have welcomed comparisons, but in view of his understandable annoyance over any reference to this question I will immediately desist and come down to June, 1960.

I would like to point out that no one, I am sure, would want to have figures of unemployment that did not represent the true facts. Out of the hon. member's own mouth the other day, from the statement he made I am able to establish how wrong the N.E.S. figures are, but they are the figures which he usually relies upon when endeavouring to show how serious unemployment is.

I will conclude, providing the hon. member wants conclusion, by saying that nothing is more the subject of concern to the government at all times than the degree of unwellcome unemployment. Today we have some