

The Address—Mr. Racine

What is even worse is that the unemployment insurance fund, to which employers and employees of our country are contributing, is practically depleted. Almost \$1 billion has been spent recklessly by the government in this field alone.

The Liberal leader was certainly right when he said in the course of this debate that the slogan "Follow John" had been very costly for the Canadian nation.

The Unemployment Insurance Act has been in force since July 1, 1941 and last year it had been in existence for 20 years.

It is quite impressive to note that under this Liberal legislation, during that period of time, over \$3 billion was paid out in benefits, that is an average of more than \$400 million each year paid out to those who suffered from unemployment, but there have been so many unemployed in the last four years that the fund has decreased alarmingly.

On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary, the dominion bureau of statistics published a special article which was reprinted in the *Labour Gazette*, the official publication of the Department of Labour.

Analysing that article in the light of the statistics on the situation of the fund, we note that due to the present unemployment situation, and the great number of benefits being paid, there has been in the last four years a huge deficit between the average annual revenues and the amount of benefits paid out. Therefore, we cannot but condemn this government for its failure to end unemployment.

What has the present government done to solve the unemployment situation? Nothing worthwhile, except passing the buck and putting the burden on the municipalities. And yet, the present situation is the very confirmation of the inefficiency of this government. What have the members of the cabinet done recently? They have travelled a lot. Sometimes, we find the Minister of Justice (Mr. Fulton) in Quebec city preaching repatriation of the constitution, while the Minister of Transport (Mr. Balcer), makes announcements about shipbuilding in British Columbia.

At about this time last year, the Prime Minister went to Japan, ostensibly to pave the way for the textile messiah, the member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Allard). Indeed, they have travelled a lot, but they have accomplished very little, and the people will certainly call them to account in the next national election.

Electoral blackmail has but a minute importance nowadays, and the Prime Minister

is well aware of that. That is why he backed down during the last session on the issue of the amendment by the other place of the bill giving certain powers to the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Nowlan). It is a well-known fact that the amendment aroused the ire of the Prime Minister who tried his hand at electoral blackmailing.

That is what led Mr. Vincent Prince of *La Presse*, to make the following statement about the Prime Minister in an editorial dated July 12, 1961, I quote:

Then why should he resort to threats? We see only one plausible reason: Mr. Diefenbaker is engaged in political blackmail. He is looking for a campaign issue.

What was true at the time that editorial was published is still true and the Prime Minister is still looking for some issue which would appeal to the people in the next election.

He tried hard in the speech from the throne to win friends among our senior citizens, but when he carries the pleasure as far as saying that the Liberals are repenting, he is wittingly mistaken because how could he have granted that increase if the act had not been passed by a Liberal government?

According to a report published in *Le Devoir* of January 10, the Prime Minister said:

Everyone still remembers the famous six dollars the Liberals had promised in 1957.

The Prime Minister should know that it was not a Tory promise but a Liberal action, and the article goes on to say:

Those who today are making promises are the same ones who believed then that six dollars were adequate.

The Prime Minister is knowingly and willfully overlooking the fact that this measure was introduced by the Liberal party and that out of the \$65 paid to the aged, \$46 come from the Liberal party and not from the Conservative government. Has the Prime Minister forgotten that the pensions now received by our senior citizens come, in the proportion of 70 per cent, from a Liberal government?

Those who benefit from those pensions have not forgotten and will not forget. They will not forget that, while they benefit from an increase, their children and grandchildren were completely overlooked.

They will recall the consideration which the previous Liberal government gave to the welfare of Canadian families, that is to say to their children and grandchildren. They will recall that the last speech from the throne was as lacking as the previous ones in family benefits, and that the important question of family allowances was ignored. Such is the