

Supply—Labour

Mr. Pickersgill: I wish to repeat these words:

It's been better every month during the last six or seven months compared with the corresponding month in the previous year.

Then the Prime Minister goes on:

Unemployment has been a serious problem not only in Canada but the United States.

The occupants of treasury benches did not say those things in the winter of 1955 when they were preaching calamity about unemployment.

Mr. Walker: Oh, stop it.

Mr. Pickersgill: Oh, I recall those words of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance. Hon. members will recall the day I read the speech made by the present Minister of Finance in 1954 about unemployment and he got up and asked why I did not tell the truth. He did not know I was merely reading his own words about a situation that was not very serious and applying it to a situation which it really did fit. I suggest that hon. gentlemen spend less time looking in the mirror and admiring themselves and a little more time looking about the country and seeing what the facts are in Canada.

Mr. Walker: You would not dare look in the mirror.

Mr. Pickersgill: Well, I do not waste my time looking in the mirror. I really try to pay some attention to the task I was elected to do and do not devote myself exclusively to self-congratulation—

Mr. Walker: You are on the verge of a breakdown.

Mr. Pickersgill: —which is the principal activity both of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Works. The Minister of Public Works says the Prime Minister is the greatest parliamentarian we ever had here—

Mr. Walker: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pickersgill: —and no doubt he believes it. But in his famous words about the statistics from the dominion bureau of statistics that Mr. Barkway produced the other evening; he may believe it but nobody else would.

I return to this document. The Prime Minister went on:

And Canada has always faced unemployment in the wintertime because of our stern conditions.

That, sir, is not in fact true. Canada has not always faced severe unemployment in the wintertime although there is a tendency for a certain amount of unemployment to develop

[Mr. Brassard (Lapointe).]

in that season. Here is the Prime Minister giving a clear, honest and straightforward picture as he always does:

Unemployment rose to high levels on more than one occasion in the early 1950's.

That is typical. First he blames the Americans and then he tries to create the impression that the situation was bad in the days of the previous government.

Mr. Cardiff: Well, wasn't it?

Mr. Pickersgill: There was only one month, sir, in the whole post-war period until 1957—only one month—when the unemployment was as bad as it has been on the average since this government came into office at all seasons of the year, and yet this is the kind of picture the Prime Minister seeks to give the Canadian people, the kind of picture he presents of the nation's business, as it is now. I continue:

But the tremendous upsurge of the economy is providing more and more jobs.

I am sorry that we still have not the D.B.S. report in order to see how many more there were in February than there were in January. However, from the last figures we had one thing we know is this. The labour force of this country grew by only 13,000 in the year 1961, which means that more people left Canada to live elsewhere than came to Canada to live in that year and our own young people could not find jobs. That is what that terrible statistic means. It means that the country has ceased growing altogether. Those are the D.B.S. figures. I suppose everybody in the country except the Minister of Public Works would accept them. However, as I say, we get this kind of statement from the Prime Minister:

We've mitigated the effects of unemployment in a vast public works program.

May I say this. If they have mitigated the effect of unemployment, it is just appalling to think what it would have been if it had not been for the vast public works program as, notwithstanding this alleged mitigation, it has been at an intolerably high level during the whole period during which this government has been in office.

Then the Prime Minister continues—but really it is fruitless to read any more. It is of the same ilk, pretending that the facts are not there, refusing to face reality. However, he sends the Minister of Labour in here to face the reality; and the reality is that the minister has exhausted this fund, this \$928 million which was accumulated. Why was it accumulated? It was accumulated because during the whole period from 1942 to 1957 there was virtually full employment. That is why the money was there. How did the