

*Economic Policies and Unemployment*

issue of *The Canadian Worker*. I am sure that the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey) would have told his colleague, the Minister of Finance about it, even though his communications with the Postmaster General and Minister of Communications (Mr. Kierans) may be somewhat different. This is what Mr. MacDonald had to say, at page 26 of this document:

It would be rather difficult not to conclude that the unemployment rate will then be higher, and maybe appreciably higher, in 1970 than it is now. It is also difficult not to realize that in 1970, unemployment will be for the Canadian people a more serious problem than that of inflation, as the rate of increase of prices slows down following recession conditions.

There, Mr. Speaker, is someone who understands the problem, who knows what he is talking about, and who warns the government of the possible disaster if the latter does not adjust his aim.

There is another painful situation: that of unemployment amongst Canadian students. In the publication of the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. MacEachen) entitled "Summer employment survey of post-secondary students in Canada—1969," one finds interesting things. For instance, that 90 per cent of the male students and 83 per cent of the female students look for employment during the summer months. It also points out that in 1968, 306,000 students looked for employment; in 1969, 346,000 and in 1970, over 400,000 young people out of a total of 64,000 students will be looking for work. That means 60,000 students more than last year.

What does the government intend to do to provide jobs to those young people who bank on summer employment to pay for their studies, to help their families make ends meet?

We would like the Minister of Finance to answer that question. We would like him and the Liberal government to give some hope to the students who are preparing their future, who are working at it now and are caught in a vice, in the economic straight-jacket imposed by the Minister of Finance. They would like to know if some day they can breathe a bit more freely and can count on the co-operation, the understanding and if possible, on the intelligence of the present Liberal government.

The situation is even more significant in the case of student employment. When we compare the situation in Ontario and in Quebec, it is in Quebec—as well as in the Maritimes—

[Mr. Valade.]

that students will be most affected by the callousness of the Minister of Finance and of the government.

We also find that the situation is paradoxical, since it is in Ontario that students were the most successful in finding work in the past and it is in Quebec and in Newfoundland that we find the lowest employment rates. One can also read on page 7 of that report:

As might be expected, generally more students found jobs in provinces with relatively low overall (all age groups) unemployment rates during the summer.

Which means that it is in the provinces where the economy is stimulated and sound—which is logical—that students have less difficulty in finding employment.

In the province of Quebec and in the Maritimes, the situation is so disturbing that it has become dangerous. What will the students do to get work during the summer months? That is the question I am asking to the Minister of Finance and I would like him to answer in order to dispel some of the anxiety felt by thousands of our students. Mr. Speaker, a great deal could be said on this subject, but I do not intend to abuse of the time allowed to me. I know that most of the things I said, except perhaps the new statistics on unemployment released by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics have already been said in this House. In newspapers and magazines, they were also said by economists, business leaders, union leaders, and the government always turned a deaf ear to those warnings. We feel duty bound, both morally and politically, to remind the government and the ministry of their human and social responsibilities in the face of the unemployment situation which is most disturbing at the present time.

Sure enough, there are solutions, among which the following, which ought to be considered by the Minister of Finance.

First, he should try to understand the present economic situation, and indicate that he is prepared to cast aside immediately his stiffness, and to free capital. He should build a climate of confidence, by indicating his intention to amend extensively the white paper, so as not to endanger the interests of those who have accumulated gains in their lifetime, and who are overly taxed at the time of their retirement, as is the case for pensioners and those who contribute to profit-sharing plans.

The Minister of Finance might also reduce the discount rate of the Bank of Canada, and take the necessary steps to lower the interest rate.