

That is a pretty impressive statement. Mr. McNeil continued:

In order to reduce our unemployment to a respectable 4 per cent—

And even 4 per cent is too much.

—next year and to provide jobs for new entrants to our labour force, our GNP would have to grow by 12 per cent, or more than double what is, in fact, likely.

So I say that we should be fair in assessing the tremendous achievement of the government in providing new jobs, as represented in the increase in the labour force during 1971.

Several years ago I had the privilege of serving on the National Productivity Council. At that time the great challenge facing the Council was in the necessity in the following five years, the period from 1960 to 1965, to create one million new jobs for Canadians. It seemed to be an impossible objective. I point out that a huge number of jobs have been created in the past five years, resulting in the addition of both men and women to the labour force in Canada.

We read all kinds of newspaper reports, and I suggest that very often the press is unfair to the government in its presentation of the facts. I should like to pass on to honourable senators a refreshing editorial which appeared in the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* on February 17, 1972, under the heading "Figures Incompletely Reported". It states in part:

Unemployment figures for January were factually, but incompetently, reported last week by a Canadian Press writer. The figures themselves were correct enough, but they were arranged in an order which buried the significant facts and gave undeserved emphasis to subsidiary information. In newspaper circles such writing is criticized as "Backing into a Story".

I assume Senator O'Leary is well aware of this. The editorial continues:

As a result, those who did not read the entire report were left with the impression basic employment in Canada had worsened within the last 12 months; whereas the official statistics indicated some improvement in it. True enough, January unemployment was worse than December's by 1.6 per cent of the labour force. But this is an entirely normal difference, resulting every year from the stoppage of many types of work in colder weather.

This should have been noted at the beginning of the report. Even earlier than that and with more emphasis, it should have been shown unemployment last month was not quite so bad as it was in January, 1971. These are the only two months which may, with fairness, be compared; not this January with this December, but this January with last January. True, the improvement was small; but it was an improvement, not a loss as the CP report's leading paragraph implied. The decrease in unemployment was only 0.3 per cent in gross, and 0.2 per cent by seasonal adjustment; but it was there.

The editorial, in the last paragraph, says:

Percentages are misleading; whole numbers are facts. And the basic fact in this case is that almost a

quarter of a million more Canadians were employed this January than in January, 1971. Statistics Canada clearly showed this: 246,000 more in the labour force, plus 3,000 fewer unemployed, adds up to 249,000 more jobs filled this January than one year ago. That is the information which should have led off the CP report and been reflected into the headlines, instead of the misleading percentage figure which appeared.

The *Star Phoenix* is not always so favourably inclined editorially to the policy of the present government. It is refreshing to find a newspaper—this is the first time I have seen it—indicating that perhaps the Canadian people should be given a more unbiased report on statistics regarding the labour and unemployment situation.

This provides an occasion for me to compliment the former Minister of Manpower and Immigration, the Honourable Otto Lang, for doing an outstanding job in a difficult portfolio. I doubt whether any man has had to face greater pressure than did Mr. Lang while occupying that position. He is now the Minister of Justice, and the Honourable Bryce Mackasey has taken over his former duties. I am sure that Mr. Mackasey will fulfil the duties of his office as well as his predecessor.

• (2040)

Economic isolation, which includes occupational isolation, must be reduced. When I refer to occupational isolation I refer to low income families, farmers, fishermen, and to all those people who do not enjoy the best things of life that Canada has to offer. I am not in a position to say too much with respect to fishermen, but if some of you would like to fish in northern Saskatchewan I can say you will find there some of the best sport fishing in Canada.

I can talk about farmers, however, and I now have an opportunity to discuss briefly the tremendous impact on the Prairie provinces of the two-price system for wheat. This program has often been discussed in this house. I am sure my distinguished colleagues, Senator McDonald and Senator Argue, have often indicated their support of this much sought after and long awaited government program. Such a program has been a long time dream of the Prairie farmers, and now the federal government has seen fit to institute a program whereby the grain consumed domestically—and this amounts to about 64 million bushels of wheat a year—will bring a price of \$1.05 a bushel, in addition to the normal market payment. This will be paid on an acreage basis, as indicated in the Speech from the Throne, and will not be added to the price of bread. It will be subsidized by the treasury of Canada and, in my view, quite rightly.

It may be a difficult thing for many of our eastern citizens, and perhaps our eastern parliamentarians, to understand and appreciate how important this is to the farmers' living. The cost-price squeeze is a real thing. I can tell you a short story I heard the other day which illustrates this point. A farmer went into a hardware store and purchased a hammer for \$2.98. A week later he returned to the store and purchased a dozen hammers, and a week after that he purchased 50 hammers. The merchant finally asked him what he was doing with all those hammers, and he said he was selling them. The merchant asked, "How can you do that when you are buying them at the retail price? How much are you selling