has doubled, whereas it has increased by about 20 per cent since 1968, the year during which this Prime Minister came into office. The indebtedness of Canadian consumers is increasing at the same rate as unemployment and the cost of living. While consumers get into debt, the federal government follows suit and gets into debt in a dangerous way in spite of heavy and ever-increasing taxes and higher tax revenues.

As stated by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) in his budget speech for 1971-1972, our country's indebtedness has increased by 784,800,000 in 1968 and by 576,100,000 in 1969. It did decrease by 392,600,000 in 1970, but increased again by 417,600,000 in 1971. At present it amounts to $25.201 billion.

As shown in Table 1, Section 6.4 of the Public Accounts for 1970-1971, the not outstanding public debt, which amounted to $10,940,200,000 in 1970, reached $25,201,200,000 in 1971. It is also interesting to see that this government is spending more and more money which it draws from the taxpayers, while at the same time maintaining high level of unemployment, allowing prices to rise constantly, and increasing our national debt.

In 1970, the government has in various ways collected $12.324 from the taxpayers, while in 1971, the budgetary operation, as the then Minister of Finance liked to call this highway robbery of the taxpayer, exceeded $12.769 billion, leaving a deficit which will only be known at the tabling of the new accounts—probably after the next election—so as to avoid scaring taxpayers away.

Yesterday, the opening of the session was not covered by the CBC technicians, while CTV workers refused to cross their fellow NABET workers' picket lines. Whatever causes for the dispute festering at the CBC, there is evidence of dissatisfaction, suspicion and antisocial feelings. One only has to see the federal electronic technicians whose functions are designated, meaning they do not have the right to strike, in the process of paralyzing air traffic in the country, and by the same token, endangering not only our economy but also human lives, and also, turning to other sectors of the public service, for example, guards and teachers in Quebec threatening to strike, the question must be asked if the right to strike granted to employees of the civil service, specially in sectors as vital as police, airports and communications, should not be reviewed for the public good. At least this is what Father Emile Bouvier thinks. This is how he was winding his remarks in a T.V. broadcast from Sherbrooke—as reproduced in *La Presse* on February 15 last—and I quote:

> However, the unexpected choice made by the union in resorting to compulsory arbitration brings us back to the settlement of disputes in the public services brought about by the 1944 legislation. It brings us back to the solution of British Columbia with its bill 33 in 1968 and to that of compulsory arbitration in Australia. Even if the right to strike is granted, labour disputes must be settled either by enforceable arbitrator's ruling or by legislation similar to Bill 1 or 25. The first solution is perhaps the safest and the least expensive. Maybe we should return to more realistic legislation which, in essential public services, would require compulsory arbitration with enforceable ruling.

The Throne Speech hardly refers to international trade problems and makes no mention whatever of the consequences for Canada of Great Britain's entry in the Common Market and of the American policy aimed at restoring a favourable trade balance. The government should have informed the population of its intention, on what it will do to correct the situation so that thousands of Canadian workers will not become unemployed on account of the restrictive policy of the United States.

[Mr. Laprise.]

With regard to newspapers, the Canadian government is cornered, caught in the trap and this during an election year because, as it happens, the American government has to face its electors and it intends to show a rosier picture even at the expense of Canada. If the U.S.-Canada trade crisis is taking a difficult turn, as headlined *Dimanche-Matin* last February 13, it is no doubt necessary to keep cool but this is not sufficient, with all due deference to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin) who is now in the process of losing his eternal smile. But is the government not to blame for this trade crisis?

As early as May 3 last, after resigning from the Trudeau cabinet, the hon. member for Duvernay (Mr. Kierans) stated the following as reported by *Le Devoir*, and I quote:

> Mr. Eric Kierans confirmed the fact that it was really because of his complete disagreement with the economic and fiscal policy of the Trudeau government that he resigned as Minister of Communications.
>
> These policies that he spurns, Mr. Kierans qualifies them as outdated since they consist, he said, in blindly promoting foreign investment to the detriment of the available labour. He added that we must stop believing that it is essential for Canada to sell its natural resources.
>
> Among other things, he said he found it deplorable that Canadian missions should be sent throughout the world to sell our natural resources—

He could have said: to give them away.

> —and that Canadians were the worst negotiators with Washington while being at the same time the most naive.
>
> It is false to believe that more exports mean more economic pump priming. It all depends on what we export. It is also false to believe, he said, that efficiency and productivity depend solely on investments.

Where is the solution? There again, the hon. member for Duvernay, since he resigned from the Liberal cabinet, has been expressing ideas that are quite acceptable to the Creditistes.

Commenting on the statement made by the hon. member for Duvernay, Mr. François Gauthier, an economist and professor at Laval University, wrote in the Montreal magazine *Les Affaires* that the government is indeed wrong in wanting to restart the economy through investments rather than by meeting the demand first.

Here is what this economist, Mr. Gauthier said:

> Mr. Kierans stresses the fact that federal policies "are forcing investment rather than demand to lead the economy". He adds and rightly so: "If I were in business, my first task would be to find out what demand there is and to provide for investments, and this not because someone would be enticing me with tax concessions".
>
> If one considers the whole of the Canadian economy, this reasoning is right even though it runs against what most economists are thinking. Indeed, when the level of demand is such that it produces a major underutilization of machinery and plants, it goes without saying that any economic recovery must proceed from an increase in consumer expenditures. When machines are idle, the natural incitation to invest is weak or absent. Any additional investment may moreover show itself to be non-profitable when demand is insufficient.