

Supply—Labour

will be seasonal employment, but I do suggest that this government should come to grips with the problem and bring forward a plan which will cure this distressing condition so prevalent throughout the nation. The Liberal party has enunciated a plan of attack. This was put before the house on February 2 by the hon. member for Essex East and reiterated by him last night in the course of his television address on "The Nation's Business". It is therefore hardly necessary for me to repeat what he said. This afternoon, moreover, he repeated the 10 points on which these proposals are based. Suffice it to say that we recommend this plan to the government, a plan infinitely superior to the hit or miss program known as the winter works program. The hon. member for Trinity stated as reported in *Hansard* for 1959 at page 3467:

This program of massive rehabilitation could be patterned on the experience gained by the Department of Veterans Affairs in the early post-war years. At that time, as you will recall, the government made it possible for veterans to undertake academic or vocational training at government expense. More than 60,000 veterans took some university training under that plan.

Some of these, of course, did not finish their course, but there is no doubt that they have been able to contribute much more to the growth and potential of the Canadian economy as a result of the opportunity which was made available to them. The contribution made by those who went through vocational training schemes was worth an additional 100 per cent.

The cost of setting up such a program as this would be much more than \$15 million but if, like the veterans rehabilitation scheme, it is successful, as we believe it would be, thousands of unemployed Canadians would again be happy. Moreover, we must remember that many of these unemployed are returned men who did not let their country down when the second world war came. An expenditure of \$100 million or more to ease this unemployment situation would be well spent, especially when we remember that there are 745,000 walking the streets of Canada today looking for jobs. This is a national emergency. We have offered certain constructive proposals and we wish now to hear from the government what it plans to do about them.

Mr. Herridge: Would the hon. member permit a question? Referring to university training for veterans, he said that many failed to complete their courses. The hon. member realizes that these formed a very small percentage of the total number.

Mr. Forgie: There was no inuendo in what I said. What I should, perhaps, have stated was that some of them, or a few of them, did not complete their courses.

Mr. Ricard: I had not intended to speak this afternoon but on hearing all the phony speeches which have been made by hon. members of the opposition I cannot help standing up to say what I think as one representing a riding which is half industrial and half rural. Let me tell you, Mr. Chairman, that there are now more people at work than there were ever before during the Liberal time.

An hon. Member: How many are unemployed?

Mr. Ricard: That is something which we should all remember—

An hon. Member: How many unemployed?

Mr. Ricard: I can tell the hon. member for Dollard that there would be many fewer people unemployed today if at the time the Liberal government was in power it had taken the advice of its own economists. But since we have received from our predecessors the obligations which have fallen upon us because of their short-sightedness, and since we have had to solve the problems which they could not solve, may I say that the people of Canada know that in the space of two or three years we cannot solve all the problems which the Grits could not solve in the 22 years they were in office. Mr. Chairman, I should like to draw to your attention that since the Conservative party came to power we have granted unemployment benefits to the fishermen. We have also granted unemployment benefits to married women who, under the Liberal government—

Mr. Pickersgill: I am rising on a question of privilege. The hon. gentleman was in the house the other day when he heard that untrue statement corrected once before. Unemployment insurance for fishermen was established by the previous government.

The Chairman: I must advise the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate that that is not a question of privilege. It is only a way of interrupting which is possibly better mannered than that in which other hon. members have interrupted.

Mr. Ricard: I know very well that the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate knew he was out of order when he rose to speak, but it is fact that benefits were paid under a Conservative government. Whether it was the Liberal government which initiated the scheme or not, they were not long in power in their ivory tower. They thought they would be there for years and years, but came the 10th of July, 1957—

Some hon. Members: June.