

Unemployment

per cent higher; for 1948 over 50 per cent higher; for 1949, when the national percentage was itself much higher than in 1947 or 1948, it was almost 49 per cent higher. For 1950 it was 42 per cent higher, and for 1951 just over 30 per cent; for 1952, 36 per cent; for 1953, almost 51 per cent; for the first eleven months of 1954, when the national figure was the worst on record, it was still 27 per cent higher than the national percentage.

Then it goes on to say:

Using the D.B.S. figure of "persons without jobs and seeking work", and taking this as a percentage of the supply in the labour market, we find that on all but one of the 52 dates the maritime percentage was above the national, usually very far above. On one date, September 18, 1954, the maritime percentage was exactly the same as the national, and on three others it was within 10 per cent of it. But there were ten dates when it was double or more than double the national percentage, and another eight when it was nearly double.

Saying this in another way:

The maritime percentages of unemployment were already so bad in 1953 that it was very nearly impossible for them to get worse in 1954, as fast and as far as the national percentages.

There is another phase of this problem to which I should like to refer briefly, and that is conditions of employment. It is a basic economic fact that people demand higher wages in areas that are not very desirable as places in which to live. People in the maritimes, therefore, because of their desire to continue living in the maritimes, are willing to accept rates of pay which are lower than those which maritimers might demand if they had to go to almost any other part of Canada to seek employment.

In this connection I would quote again from the *Labour Research* bulletin, which says at page 2:

For the three maritime provinces, in 1946, personal income per head was \$177, or 22.3 per cent below the national average; by 1949, \$287, or 30.2 per cent below; by 1953, \$406, or 33.2 per cent below. At the end of the war, the gap was already considerable. Last year it was about 50 per cent worse.

Then again:

For the three maritime provinces, in 1946, income per member of the labour force was \$307, or 15.0 per cent, below the national average; by 1949, \$573, or 23.1 per cent; by 1953, \$770, or 22.7 per cent. The percentage gap is much smaller than for income per head, in all three years. For the three maritime provinces, the gap in 1953 was again about 50 per cent worse than in 1946.

The reason there is a greater difference between the per capita income in the maritimes and that of the rest of Canada than there is in the per capita income for the labour force in those respective areas is that in the maritimes the percentage of the labour force to the total population is not as great as it is in the rest of Canada, simply because large numbers of our young people who are

members of the labour force have been forced to go to other provinces to seek employment, and those who are left behind are the non-wage-earners, the aged and the young.

Of course, the obvious question to ask is, what is the cause of this situation? One of the causes is the lack of suitable markets for the products of the maritimes. In that connection I should like to refer briefly to the report of the Gallup poll, which was taken last fall and published in the *Montreal Star* on September 8, 1954. The result of this Gallup poll showed, when compared with previous ones, that in 1950, 15 per cent of the Canadian population felt that unemployment was the most urgent question facing the Canadian people. In 1951, that number had dropped to 3 per cent, but in 1954 it had risen to 32 per cent. In the maritimes it was found that a great percentage of the population felt that the problem of suitable markets was of more importance. More people in the maritimes felt that to be so than in any other area of Canada except the prairie provinces.

One of the basic handicaps in the maritimes of course is the lack of cheap power. We also have the handicap of the failure of this government to spend a fair share of defence expenditures in the maritime provinces. I note with satisfaction that in recent years there has been some slight correction of that problem. The new military camp at Gagetown will create a certain amount of employment in that area, and some of the vast amount of money which is now being spent on defence will be funnelled into that area. Of course, the same could be said of the naval base in Halifax but not too much credit should be given to the present government for making Halifax one of its most important naval bases, because a precedent was set for it by the Royal Navy over 150 years ago.

Considerable satisfaction is felt in various areas of the maritimes over the fact that some R.C.A.F. stations have been reactivated there since the war, and they have a beneficial effect on the immediate communities. That beneficial effect is experienced by such towns as Summerside and Chatham.

Perhaps we should not attempt—I for one would not—to blame all our difficulties on other people or on the rest of Canada. We in the maritimes should bear our fair share of the responsibility for the depressed economic conditions in the maritimes. We in the maritimes have not been proud enough of our part of the country. We are a modest people, and when we hear people from the

[Mr. MacLean.]