

not want to discuss the figures supplied by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics but, before giving some examples of unemployment in Canada, I might point out that the Progressive Conservative government was in office in 1963. Badly decimated, the Liberal party was the official opposition and, in the interest of all Canadians, it should have stayed there.

Mr. Speaker, we remember the never-ending attacks of the Liberals against the Progressive Conservative government at that time. In fact, I have here a copy of a statement made by the right hon. Lester B. Pearson, former Liberal Leader, at Sault-Sainte-Marie on May 7, 1962. Here is what he said:

535,000 unemployed in 1964 and the Conservatives remain in power.

In 1964, the Liberals were in power and we witnessed the highest unemployment rate while today the number of unemployed reaches 544,000.

I would like the Liberals to remember that statement of their former leader in order to establish which of the two parties betrayed its commitments and its responsibilities towards the Canadian people.

Mr. Speaker, if we examine the figures released by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, we realize that in 1967, 1968 and 1969, the unemployment rate kept rising.

For the months of January, February, March and April, unemployment rates in Canada were respectively 6.1, 6.4, and 5.7 per cent in 1968, 5.9, 6, 5.7 and 5.4 in 1969; in 1970 the average for the same months was 6.6 per cent. But it is in Quebec that the situation is most critical. Yet Quebec was loyal, too much so perhaps, and fooled to some extent by the Liberal party's promises during the last election campaign, having sent to this Parliament more than 55 Liberal members. What a tragedy! If people could retrace their steps, they would willingly act otherwise.

Figures do not lie as they are published by a federal agency. Well, in Quebec there were 206,000 unemployed in March, 203,000 in April and the figure for May is expected to rise to 207,000. The percentage was 9.2 per cent in March of this year and 8.9 per cent in April.

If we now refer to the figures concerning the Atlantic provinces, we note that it was in that area that the unemployment rate was the highest, since it reached 10.4 per cent.

In British Columbia, in a province under a Cr ditiste administration which is said to work miracles—and I hope that those who praise the cr ditiste principles will explain to

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us that phenomenon—the unemployment rate stands at 7 per cent for the current year. And what is more disquieting is that contrary to previous years—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. B chard): Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired. Unless the House gives its unanimous consent, the hon. member will not be allowed to proceed.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. B chard): Agreed. The hon. member for Sainte-Marie (Mr. Valade).

• (12:30 p.m.)

Mr. Valade: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues who are reciprocating our past courtesies on the occasion of debates in the House.

Mr. Speaker, the most alarming fact is this: contrary to the tendency of the last five years, when the number of unemployed decreased by about 32,000 per annum in the month of April, at present their number tends not to decrease but to increase, a clear sign that we are really experiencing a serious recession. Therefore, there is urgency for the government to propose solutions and to offer incentives to the Canadian economy.

There is another alarming indication. In the manufacturing industry, the number of jobs decreased by 11,000 in April, instead of increasing, a fact that the Minister of Finance can certainly confirm. Normally, an increase should have occurred.

Both these situations really indicate that unemployment, instead of receding is growing, which is going to be disastrous.

I wonder what the government intends to do to stop this.

So far, I agree with my colleague who said the government had given no indication whatsoever about how it was going to steer the wheel in the right direction. It remains undisturbed, and goes on enforcing its policy while already aware that it is bad and contrary to the public interest.

There is a lot of evidence to support this for the government and the Minister of Finance have been given a number of warnings in this respect.

I would like to quote here the warning given by a union leader, Mr. Donald MacDonald, the chairman of the Canadian Labour Congress as reported in the January 1970