

commitment in this area. Unemployment, with its alleviation, constitutes the largest and most discussed factor underlying the five points. No one wishes to make light of the plight of the unemployed. However, I think it does not hurt to remind ourselves that their plight is certainly much more favourable than was the situation in the 1930s. I am sure all of us are glad that government measures, while they may not be perfect, and while they may permit certain abuses, have made forever impossible the situation which existed during those dark years following the stock market crash in 1929, from which this country did not fully recover until the years of World War II.

The government has been criticized, as one would expect, for the level of unemployment in this country; and no one can take satisfaction from the unemployment figures which averaged around 6 per cent during a large portion of the 1960s. The government also has been criticized for the level of control or lack of control of assistance to the unemployed. The Prime Minister has often referred to his goal of achieving a just society. In striving for this just society the government may have erred on the side of mercy by developing a compassionate society. Even so, this is to be preferred to the situation which existed in the 1930s, even if there are some abuses. I am glad the government recognizes the need to review and reappraise the unemployment insurance system as well as other related social and welfare measures.

Let me say a word regarding the employment situation in Canada over the decade of the 1960s. Here I shall place on record figures which I have derived from the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Commercial Letter of September/October, 1972, which contains an article entitled *The Canadian Economy, 1972-73*. The table is as follows:

	1962	1971	% Increase
Population of Canada	18,583	21,568	16.1
Total civilian labour force	6,615	8,631	30.5
Employment	6,225	8,079	29.8
Unemployment rate (%) (Annual Average)	5.9%	6.4%	

All figures, except percentages, in thousands.

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The figures to which I wish to call your attention in this table have to do, first of all, with Canada's population growth from 1962 to 1971, which was, approximately, from 18.5 million to 21.5 million, an increase of 16.1 per cent. The trend into 1972, I read in the newspaper today, by the way, is approximately at the same rate of growth. The total Canadian labour force during the same period increased by over two million but, since this was from 6.6 million to 8.6 million, it was an increase of 30.5 percentage points, nearly twice the increase in the labour force as compared to the increase in our total population. The employment increase was from 6,225,000 in 1962 to 8,079,000 in 1971. These are yearly averages, for an increase of 29.8 per cent. In other words, of that large increase in the labour force, nearly twice the rate of general population growth, all but 0.7 per cent was absorbed into employ-

ment, a not inconsiderable record, even though during this period of abnormal growth our unemployment rate increased from an annual average of 5.9 per cent for the 1962 year to 6.4 per cent for the 1971 year.

In moving this motion in February 1972 in this place, Senator Buckwold referred to a statement which had been made by the Executive Vice-President and General Manager of the Bank of Montreal, which I think is worth repeating:

We have a labour force growing at almost twice the rate of any other industrialized nation. During the present decade, in fact, it has been calculated that more people in absolute numbers, not percentages, will enter the work force in Canada than in the United Kingdom, France; Belgium and The Netherlands combined.

That is a group of countries whose population is more than five times that of Canada, but we will be adding to our work force, according to this prognostication, in the 1970s more persons than the total of those countries. It seems to me that this is a highly significant fact and that while none of us can take comfort from our unemployment figures, we should take pride in the rapid growth in the economy and of the labour force of this country, and in our ability to absorb nearly all the increase into the labour force. Surely as soon as there is the slightest levelling off in this population growth the unemployment figures in Canada ought to be much better. In the meantime, however, it seems to me that we should be as generous as possible in making available a decent living, a respectable and honourable living to those people who are unfortunate enough to be caught in the rolls of the unemployed at this time. It is not much consolation for an unemployed person to be told that the figures have dropped from 6 per cent to 3 per cent if he is included in the 3 per cent. I am sure we are all anxious that all measures should be adopted to improve the situation by means of the short-term methods which have been referred to in the Speech from the Throne and by the longer-term incentives which seem to be to be even more important.

Other specific proposals on which I should like to comment briefly have to do with the social policy of the country.

Hon. Mr. O'Leary: May I ask the honourable senator a question? Will he give us the benefit of his wisdom with respect to inflation and will he agree with the Prime Minister that six months ago it was licked?

Hon. Mr. Hicks: I do not believe that is a question that requires an answer, honourable senators.

Hon. Mr. O'Leary: Do you agree with the Prime Minister's statement that inflation was licked in this country six months ago? That is a question.

Hon. Mr. Hicks: Are you asking me whether the Prime Minister said it or not?

Hon. Mr. O'Leary: I am asking you whether you agree with the Prime Minister, who said six months ago that inflation in this country had been licked. Do you agree with that, or do you not? What is the answer?

Hon. Mr. Hicks: No, I cannot agree with that statement at the present time. If it did appear that way six months