

be presented in years to come, so as to better fleece the people in favour of finance.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) announced a deficit of \$570 million in his supplementary budget for 1970-71 and another of \$600 million in the 1971-72 budget. Those deficits represent new taxes for the Canadian people and at an early date, in spite of the promises on the part of experts who predicted a \$250 million surplus, announced by the hon. Minister of Finance in March 1970. All statistics on unemployment are the result, as I explained earlier, of a heap of figures established in a non-scientific way, that the government may change when they see fit by ordering inquiries in sectors or areas suitable for hiring, so as to better disguise unemployment.

[English]

**Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena):** Mr. Speaker, there being only a few moments left before the vote on the budget takes place I think I should state at the outset that usually I look upon it as a kind of pleasurable venture to speak in this House, but I cannot say that this evening. I do not see how anybody could have any joy in participating in a debate that primarily revolves around unemployment, in these days where there is a large amount of despair and disillusionment among thousands and thousands of Canadians; where misery, as a result of people being out of work, is almost unparalleled in our history; where, Mr. Speaker, in a land of plenty we have got thousands and thousands of families in need and in destitute or near destitute conditions; when in this land the good life abounds around us in all areas and all directions but does not quite reach into the bread line; where the affluence and wealth of this nation are beyond a person's dreams, agricultural, natural and human, and the only spin-off that comes from that type of wealth is the spin-off of welfare and unemployment insurance.

These results, from the type of structure and system we have, are lauded by the government as being prime attributes of its own policies and its own decisions. This afternoon the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson)—one of the only times I have heard him say this—told the House that he was concerned about the unemployed. After he had made many answers to many questions today and on other days, being flippant and arrogant about it, he finally exhibited some degree of concern. But I think that is the sort of concern of the comfortable. That is the type of concern that is irrelevant to the real situation in life. That is the sort of concern that is an insult to the people who are unemployed in this nation. It is the concern of a man who participated in a program deliberately designed to create unemployment. And that is the sort of concern that should be rejected because it is not, in fact, concern.

It is the concern of a man who enjoys playing the numbers racket, the concern of a gentleman who in the old English term would probably be called a nutcracker or schemer, someone intent on covering up his own incompetence and the bungling and failure of his government. Is it any wonder that the three opposition parties, who have divergent views on what should take place to get the economy into shape, should band together in the

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face of such bungling? Why should the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Gray) ask such a question? That is the reason the opposition parties are combined together, because they think in terms of human needs and requirements, not in terms of statistics and the numbers game played by the Department of Manpower and Immigration and the Department of Labour, and tonight by the Minister of National Revenue who poured out statistic after statistic after statistic, which proved to me the truth of the old saying that figures don't lie but liars sometimes figure.

That is precisely what the Minister of National Revenue has been doing and the government has been doing it every day that new statistics develop. They have argued about the validity of it, about how many people it contains, what its implications are and what its implications are not. Surely that is irrelevant. There should be more concern about people themselves, about misery, about the degradation that takes place when people are forced to walk the streets looking for employment but cannot find it. Then we had the Minister of Finance say almost gleefully today, in the television room down the corridor, that if unemployment insurance is not available to people the government had done such wonders through the Canada Assistance Plan that people could go on welfare. That is, Mr. Speaker, a shameful insult to the people of this nation and to their social requirements. It is no answer if the government says: We want to see people end up on welfare. We can do little except put them on unemployment insurance and juggle with the figures and facts.

● (9:40 p.m.)

The people of our nation ought to realize what this government is really concerned about. It is concerned, not about the social good of the unemployed people of this nation, not about the present state of the economy and not about the degradation and destruction of social life and family life but about the situation as it will be in 1972. The government is gearing every one of its activities with its eyes firmly fixed at the middle point of that year. Why is that, Mr. Speaker? According to the cold, heartless calculation of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), 1972, unless something unusual happens, will be the year of the next federal election. That is what the government has its eyes on. That is when the propaganda mechanism will be in full use. He thinks that perhaps the people will forget by 1972 what happened to them this time.

I think the government is in for a rude awakening. This sort of thing has gone on in previous years. Previous governments, most of them Liberal, tried to engineer matters so that they could successfully fight general elections. This government said that it deliberately set out to cure what it called inflation by creating unemployment and it is now saying that it will cure unemployment by creating inflation. People will not buy that sort of thing. The Liberal party has long been noted for its deceit, chicanery and doubletalk. Basically there is no difference between it now and what it was a number of years ago, except that there are some different faces at the top. It is led by the same sort of people. At present we have a