

these excuses. The average annual increase in the labour force in the five Pearson years from 1963 to 1967 inclusive was as high as 3.1 per cent, and in the Trudeau years dropped to 2.9 per cent. The average annual increase in employment in the Pearson years was 3.5 per cent; in the Trudeau years it dropped to 2.3 per cent. As far as participation rates are concerned, the average rate of increase in the Pearson years was twice as high as in the Trudeau years; it went from an average increase of .32 to an average of .15.

The average rate of unemployment in the five Pearson years was 4.4 per cent. The average rate of unemployment in the four years under the Trudeau government has been 5.5 per cent. Once and for all, let us not have these dishonest excuses about increases in the labour force, unemployment and participation rates. These excuses are false, as shown by the history. In short, unemployment between 1963 and 1967 inclusive was substantially lower despite higher increases in the labour force and in participation rates.

Indeed, to find a period of unemployment in the last 15 years comparable to the present, one has to go back to the years 1958 to 1962 when a Conservative government was in power and pursued policies similar to those pursued by the present government. If anything has ever proven how these two parties are exactly alike, this history alone proves it. If the Liberals can take consolation out of the fact that a Conservative government did not do any better, they are welcome to such consolation. And if the Conservatives think they can persuade Canadians to believe that despite their record when they were in power they can do better now, I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) and his colleagues that they underestimate the intelligence of the Canadian electorate.

But the Prime Minister was not satisfied with those excuses. He went a shameful step further. He resorted to insulting the unemployed and the intelligence of Canadians generally by declaring that there are many unfilled jobs and the unemployed could have them if they were only ready to take them at lower wages and at considerable distances from their homes. I have often asked myself seriously what was the purpose of this statement.

Everyone knows that even in the crisis of the thirties there were some unfilled job vacancies. Everyone also knows that there are, unfortunately, some few members of our society who reject their duty to provide for themselves. But the Prime Minister's own Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Munro) on more than one occasion has underlined, as a result of surveys, that the number of such people is a small and insignificant proportion of those on welfare and/or unemployed. What, then, was the Prime Minister's purpose in making the assertion about job vacancies and repeating it two or three times, if it was not to mislead the Canadian people about the seriousness of the unemployment crisis and to encourage a mean backlash against dealing humanely with people in need?

One of the spots the Prime Minister pointed to in one of his assertions was Sudbury. Even at the time he was speaking Inco was laying off employees. Since then further lay-offs have been announced, to the point that the entire community is concerned about its future. I have not heard the Prime Minister condemn Inco or other corpora-

tions, many of them foreign-owned, for ignoring their duty to their workers and their obligations to the communities from which they have extracted huge profits through the years. Indeed no; the corporations are too powerful. He aims his strictures at the unemployed, the helpless and the weak, and I say "shame." In any case, the Prime Minister knew or should have known that his statements were unfounded. The job survey made by a department of his government showed that throughout 1971 there were from 10 to 26 jobless Canadians for every job vacancy, whether temporary, seasonal or permanent. This kind of attitude, I have said before and I repeat, with sadness, but I believe it needs repeating, was possible only for a man who never had to scramble to pay his rent.

Look at DREE, Mr. Speaker, and tell me where that shows competence. The Prime Minister boasted about the fact that over \$900 million has been spent by that department. That is precisely where the incompetence lies. One of the few specific undertakings made by the Prime Minister in 1968 has turned out to be a shambles in application. Every objective body in the Atlantic area, and every objective expert in the field of regional disparity has criticized the planlessness and lack of initiative in the work of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion, despite the sincere intentions of the minister in charge.

In the minister's own province, in the Gaspé area, there was an excellent example of this with an expenditure of \$250 million, most of which went to researchers and almost none of which went to the people in the area. The purpose was good; the implementation has been a model of incompetence. Hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars have been offered and received mainly by large foreign corporations. And the result? Hardly a ripple in the objective of removing poverty and disparities in the disadvantaged areas of Canada.

Think of Bathurst, New Brunswick, where the minister, the Leader of the Opposition and I attended an angry day of concern some weeks ago. Lay-offs and shut downs haunt the present and future of this disadvantaged part of Canada. Think of Corner Brook, Newfoundland, where lay-offs by a large pulp and paper corporation have raised unemployment levels to near disaster. Think of Témiscamingue in Quebec where CIP is closing down a plant employing 875 Canadians. And then remember the millions of dollars given to Parsons and Whitmore to build competing pulp mills in Saskatchewan, and the \$13.7 million offered to a subsidiary of IT and T to build a new mill in Quebec.

I see you are about to rise, Mr. Speaker, to tell me my time has expired. I wonder if I may respectfully ask for a few extra minutes to complete my remarks.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Does the House agree to give the hon. member time to complete his remarks?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Lewis: I say, Sir, that this is not competence; this is planless chaos. I am not saying that nothing has been accomplished. Some new jobs have been created and I welcome that. But the program as a whole has not even made a dent in regional expansion. And it will continue to fail, as all such programs have failed in the past, because