

people in the province of Newfoundland. Many other examples are to be found in other regions of Canada.

In the matter of unemployment, we have in Canada today a very high unemployment rate throughout the country. However, in some regions it is twice as high as it is in the more wealthy parts of Canada. This disparity has been evident over the long term as well. For example, from 1956 to 1960 there was an average unemployment rate in the Maritimes of 10 per cent, while in the province of Ontario the rate was 4 per cent. What is the result of this situation? It means, first of all, that the opportunities offered a person and his family depend upon the area in which he lives. It is the area of the country in which he lives, not necessarily his ability, that determines his standard of living and his family's opportunities. As a result of these disparities among the various regions of the country, people face problems that you cannot really calculate, that are immeasurable in terms of human sacrifice and struggle.

As we all know, regional disparity in Canada is losing this country millions of dollars every year by way of lost productivity, because we are not operating at capacity. If there were no regional problems, this problem would not arise. Because of this, those people who live in the more depressed areas are caught in a vicious cycle of poverty. As a result of low income, high unemployment and low productivity, the people in these areas suffer from lower educational standards than people who live in the more affluent parts of the country. They have more inadequate health and welfare services. When their children grow up and acquire a skill or some form of training, they see them move to different parts of the country in search of employment.

The regional difficulties that I have described pose a real challenge to national unity in Canada. We will not achieve national unity and we will not be sure that confederation is here to stay until we make certain that each and every area of Canada is an equal partner in that confederation. I think that social and economic disparity in Canada creates more problems for trying to maintain unity in this country than anything else. This fact seems ironic in view of what has happened in recent years. Just 2½ years ago when the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) took over the reins of government, he talked about a new look and a new approach in Canada. He stressed national unity and talked of solving the problems of regional disparity and regional poverty. In addition, he talked a lot about participatory democracy.

When we examine what has happened in those 2½ years we find there is probably more disunity in Canada today than ever before in the history of the country. Since the hon. member became Prime Minister of Canada we have seen in the province of Quebec the rise of a separatist party that captured 24 per cent of the vote in that province. In recent months and weeks we have seen terrorist activities unprecedented on the North American continent. In addition to this, in the last 2½ years we have heard a great deal about a new phenomenon—western alienation.

Regional Development Incentives Act

I suggest that these conditions have been caused by the disadvantaged position of people in the poorer regions, both socially and economically. This has resulted from the increase in unemployment in areas such as Quebec, the Maritimes and certain parts of western Canada, which in turn has meant increased poverty. Before you have discontent and violence you must have a breeding ground. I suggest that the Prime Minister and his government must bear much of the responsibility for the unrest that we have in Canada today. This Prime Minister, through his lack of policies, has probably contributed more to disunity than any other Prime Minister. Certainly there has been no regional policy to remove the inequities between one region and another. This is obvious when we consider some of the problems plaguing the country. Before you can do anything about regional disparity in Canada you have to do something about the general economic situation in the country as a whole.

Consider for a moment the present unemployment rate. Over the last few months Canada has experienced the highest unemployment rate of any industrialized nation. I do not think this is something of which we can be proud. This country is rich in natural resources and technical knowledge, yet we have the highest unemployment rate of any industrialized country in the world. When we look at the incidence of unemployment we find it is much worse in the Maritimes, eastern Quebec and the Prairies than it is in the more industrialized parts of this country. We also observe that unemployment is hitting the youth of this country pretty hard. Just today questions were raised in the House about the high level of unemployment among the young people of Canada. Nearly half our unemployed are under the age of 25. We cannot be proud of this. About 38 per cent of our unemployed live in the province of Quebec. I suggest to the government that this is one of the reasons many of the people in Quebec are taking separatism very seriously; they see it as one way of getting away from the lack of policies on the part of the federal government.

• (9:10 p.m.)

When we are dealing with unemployment figures and statistics we do not always reveal the actual number of people who are unemployed. I suggest that there is hidden unemployment in Canada. Many people have dropped out of the labour force and, for one reason or another, have failed to register this fact. In any small town in Saskatchewan we find servicemen, repairmen, carpenters and people of this type are working on a part-time basis because there is not sufficient full-time work. These people are not registered and are not counted among the unemployed. In the province of Saskatchewan many hundreds of young people are going back to their homes on the farm because they cannot find work in the cities to which they migrated. These people are not counted as part of our unemployed. We find the same situation among women. Many women have given up trying to find a job and have gone back to the home. They, also, are not tabulated and do not become part of the unemployment statistics.