

*Interim Supply*

**Mr. Starr:** I am talking about the number of people working.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** The number of unemployed is greater than it was a year ago.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Order. The rules of the committee allow only one speaker at a time. The hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate has the floor.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I come back to the Prime Minister's television speech of March 3, 1960. He said:

And as you know, there was the unemployment problem which we inherited.

I have dealt with the inheritance, sir, and the mess they have made of the wonderful inheritance they received. Then the Prime Minister came to his great pronouncement. This was the revised vision, the vision of 1958 revised and brought up to date in 1960.

I do not want to see a single day of unnecessary suffering.

Well, sir, in 1958, when the people were on the verge of voting, they were told there would be no suffering from unemployment. Now, it is "no unnecessary suffering". I do not know what necessary suffering is, but I do know that this is not the bill of goods that was sold to the Canadian people. I use that term advisedly. The Canadian people are beginning to find that out.

Then, the Prime Minister went on to state:

Neither do my colleagues. And the result was we had to spend—

I would ask the Minister of Finance to reply to this because it deals directly with what we are dealing with right now. This is the Prime Minister's statement of policy for unemployment for 1960.

And the result was we had to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to provide jobs through housing and public works and other projects. We have planned for a deficit.

Whether they planned for it or not, they certainly got one and it was a whopper.

We had to borrow money.

They certainly did. They have borrowed nearly \$2 billion since they came into office and they have sent interest rates up to such a height that other people cannot afford to borrow at all. That is what they have done.

We were, of course, criticized for this, but when I thought of the families of the unemployed, I knew for me there was no other course, deficit or no deficit.

Then, after a pause for tears, the Prime Minister went on:

In the same circumstances, I would make exactly the same decision again.

Well, here are the same circumstances, sir. Here are precisely the same circumstances. As I pointed out, according to the dominion

bureau of statistics figures there were 555,000 unemployed in February of this year and 563,000 in February, 1958. Has the government made the same decision? I ask the Minister of Finance who finds this to be a great joke—

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** I do not find it a great joke.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I ask the Minister of Finance, who seems to find the plight of the unemployed, over half a million of them, a great joke—

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** I rise on a point of order. The hon. gentleman has just made an intentional reflection on another hon. member. He said I was taking mirth out of the unemployment situation. That statement, of course, is utterly untrue and he knows it perfectly well: I happened to be engaging in a mirthful expression at the time but it was not with regard to unemployment or because I regarded unemployment as a joke, as he suggested. If he wants something to provoke mirth, I could say something—

**An hon. Member:** You had better not.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** No. I think I will refrain from referring to him. His reflection is highly improper and he knows it.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, I was addressing certain remarks to the Minister of Finance who was doing me the great courtesy of listening to them most attentively, as he himself has attested. I repeat them to him now. I say that the Prime Minister told us that they were criticized for planning for a deficit and for borrowing money for what the Prime Minister described was the purpose of relieving unemployment. I do not believe it was for any such purpose, but that is what the Prime Minister said. Then he went on to say this:

—but when I thought of the families of the unemployed, I knew for me there was no other course, deficit or no deficit.

That is what he said. Then he went on to say this in this broadcast. He did not say it in this chamber; he did not do us the courtesy to come into the house and tell us what the government policy was; he took no part in the debate but right afterwards he went on the air and he said this:

In the same circumstances, I would make exactly the same decision again.

The circumstances are the same. We have 555,000 unemployed in a time that hon. gentlemen opposite say is a time of recovery as opposed to 563,000 unemployed in the depths of the latest recession. Are the circumstances, so far as unemployment is concerned, not the same? Are the families of