

exploitation of the lowest paid workers in this country. Let me remind the Minister of Finance that it is still a very small minority of working people who get the kind of wages which could be considered just, and that might be held in line. I agree that there are some in that category.

I am not saying that all organized labour is in all cases reasonable. There are sections of the organized labour movement that have squeezed wage increases out of the economy that one could legitimately criticize. But by and large, the organized and unorganized workers in this country are not receiving the kind of wages that any decent person would say ought to be kept at their present level, or increased only by a small amount.

For a long time we have said that you cannot do anything by voluntary restraint. The Minister of Finance continues to trot out the alleged agreement to hold the line by the business community of this province. Mr. Speaker, I said at the time and I say to the minister now, that I have never in my life seen a phonier document than that which John Young produced. It is a phony as all the other policies John Young and his commissioners have pursued.

I remember the great philanthropic chartered banks of this country agreeing not to increase their charges any more, nor interest rates any more, except within certain limits. Well, by gad by the time that agreement had been signed they had so squeezed bank charges and interest rates out of the Canadian people that there really was no more room for increases. The situation reminds me of the thief who has stolen everything in your house and then stands outside saying, "Don't worry; I am not going to steal anything more." That is about the level of the agreement that was made by the so-called business world on holding prices. That is also true of the retail trade and of the professional people, such as lawyers. They agreed that they would hold their fees at a certain level. They no more held them than did the organized workers of this country.

• (3:50 p.m.)

If there had been a case for holding the wage line, and if inflation had reached a point where that was absolutely essential, then my leader, other members of this party on numerous occasions and the Canadian Labour Congress itself on one or two occasions, have said that if there were an incomes policy which covered all income, wages, salaries, dividends, interest, rent and capital gains, then this should be considered by organized labour as well as by the rest of the community. The essential fact is there simply is no planning in respect of this government's economic policy. The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), I believe around Christmas last year, said we had licked inflation and would go on to lick unemployment. It would be a roundabout affair each year. That is, they would fight inflation one year and fight unemployment the next year. This year he says he is fighting unemployment. Just as sure as blazes, inflation will continue to increase.

Inflation has already gone up one half of one point or of 1 per cent—I do not recall which—in the first

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months of this year. If it goes on at this rate, we will have an inflation rate of 4 per cent or 5 per cent in 1971. I suppose when we reach that point, the Prime Minister and the government will decide to slow down the economy because they have to fight inflation again. One of the unforgivable effects of the kind of economic policy the government has followed has been the extent to which it has slowed down the economy thus increasing the number of unemployed to the official figure of 675,000. I venture to suggest that unofficially it is probably between three-quarters of a million and 800,000, because there are many tens of thousands who do not get into the statistics. The kind of misery that has been produced by this policy for two million or three million people has caused a problem so deep that it will not be solved in a year or in two years.

The economists of the Economic Council of Canada say that it will likely take until 1973 or 1974 before we are at a level of even four per cent of unemployment, let alone the three per cent temporary unemployment figure which is considered to be the maximum we should have in this country. The Minister of Finance says it is easy to condemn, and he asks us to tell him exactly what we would do. If one had more than 20 minutes one would, but I do not believe I have many minutes left. I am told I have almost 10 minutes.

Let me say we propose, first, that the government should have full employment as the objective for society in Canada. Under no conditions can Parliament tolerate a policy which deliberately creates unemployment, which deliberately throws men and women out of work and which deliberately throws their families into degradation, misery and loss of self-respect.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Lewis: Secondly, we say that a regional development policy such as is being followed by this government should not be continued. This policy is being carried on without a plan and without an objective. It is a passive policy. What happens in respect of the incentives of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion? The bureaucracy sits in the office. It makes no plans. It does not attempt to relate industrial development in one province to another or in one plant to another. It sits in the office and waits for applications from someone for a capital grant or a grant related to the incentive program. It just sits there and waits for, in most cases, the large foreign controlled corporations, such poverty stricken corporations as Proctor-Gamble, or example, or destitute corporations like IBM, really poverty stricken multinational corporations. These corporations, of course, have no capital at all, and without the millions from the public treasury these poor people would fall flat on their faces. The bureaucrats in the Department of Regional Economic Expansion sit at their desks and wait for these poverty stricken philanthropic corporations to make a request for a grant.

There is no planning in respect of the kind of industry the Atlantic provinces should have. There is no relationship in the grants given to the actual local needs of the community or the indigenous possibilities. There is no