

*Supply—Labour*

more, done more and achieved more in two years than all previous governments together have done since confederation.

But if I were not absolutely convinced as I stand here that this government could do and must do much more and much better than it is doing in regard to unemployment, I would not be making the following remarks. I have tried as best I can to encourage the cities, towns and municipalities in my riding to go along with this winter works program. But, you see, they point out that in some cases about 70 per cent to 80 per cent of the cost of those projects is taken up in heavy equipment, which does not equal out as jobs for people. Furthermore, these municipalities are hard up. The tax rates in every case are as high as if not higher than, the people can afford. For these reasons it is difficult for the cities and towns in areas such as mine to come to the conclusion that they can spend so much money on a public works program that will result in so few jobs for the people.

It is true, I understand—the minister can correct me if I am not right—that the city of Edmundston in my riding was the first city in all Canada to undertake a winter works project. It did result in a great many jobs and the city council is to be congratulated, but that project is now completed. By and large, Mr. Chairman, the winter works program, at least in my riding, is not achieving the results we must have if we are going to keep our people employed, especially during the winter months.

I will start with the premise that if we as a party had kept our promises made to the Canadian people before the 1957 election there would be no more than 200,000 people unemployed in Canada now instead of the nearly 800,000 unemployed we now have. This number will increase in the next few months, and it does not represent all the people who are out of work. As I said the other day, in my riding many people follow the woods, which is the expression commonly used. Many people work in the bush cutting wood on their own stands. They will go to a pulp company and say, "All right, I will cut you 200 cords of wood". They get no unemployment insurance stamps, and along comes the time when there is no more wood to cut or the snow is too deep to go into the woods. At about this time of the year these people are out of work without any unemployment insurance benefits. What is more important, Mr. Chairman, is that these people do not show in the figures that are before us today.

I listened to the hon. member for Essex East this morning, and I would say that about

[Mr. Van Horne.]

70 per cent of the points he brought out in his proposals were the very same points that we brought out in 1957, before the June election. We sold the Canadian people, in the maritime provinces at least, a bill of goods. We have no right now to forget those promises, let alone decide which ones we are going to keep and which ones we are going to throw aside.

The first and most serious set of promises was contained in the maritime resolutions, the Atlantic provinces manifesto, which were agreed to on many occasions by the party and to which every Progressive Conservative candidate in the maritime provinces subscribed before the election of June 10, 1957. This was a solemn document. It was the blueprint for a new deal for the Atlantic provinces. It dealt with a capital works program and many other things to which the hon. member for Essex East referred a few minutes ago as now being part of his party's program. That was our program in 1957, and that was the new deal which ensured the victory of the Conservative candidates in the Atlantic provinces. It dealt with capital works projects, redress with respect to freight rates, the Chignecto canal, the causeway, cheap power, trade, relief of tariff barriers, the right to do business where business can be found, recognition that the Atlantic provinces represent different economic aspects than those applicable to the rest of Canada. These were the things that we were so sincere in explaining to our people.

I maintain in all humility, sir, that if we had inaugurated 50 per cent of what we promised in 1957 there would be no unemployment in the maritime provinces today. What happened? We came to power on the strength of those promises, and we were no sooner on this side of the house than we let the Liberal experts take over most of the duties of the government.

I am very sorry I have to say these things, but I feel it is my duty to do so. If I did not think it was my duty to make these remarks I would not make them. Not only have we forgotten the Atlantic resolutions, that great document of Atlantic rights, but the Canadian people also seem to have forgotten about them. I hope that is not because they did not take these promises seriously, but that would appear to be the case.

Another thing that would solve our unemployment problem in the Atlantic provinces is a housing act similar to the one that exists in the United States, because it would permit people with low incomes to buy houses. Do not forget, Mr. Chairman, that on the average the people of Canada earn 30 per cent less