

*Unemployment*

**Mr. Martin:** You ask me?

**Mr. Argue:** —further statement, when he says:

The prophets of gloom—

Just listen to this.

The prophets of gloom reported the fact that unemployment was up but not the encouraging fact that employment is also increasing.

You ask the 600,000 who are unemployed whether—

**Mr. Martin:** Are you asking me?

**Mr. Argue:** —it is any help to them if there is going to be one more on the employment rolls next year, and we shall be happy to listen, and without interruption, to a 40-minute speech by the Minister of National Health and Welfare explaining his position on the statement.

**Mr. Martin:** I have.

**Mr. Argue:** And Mr. MacTavish goes on to say:

Mischievous little boys who play with fire and cause public damage can be punished, but mischief committed in the guise of free speech which results in serious damage to the common welfare escapes the punishment it deserves.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that such a statement is an affront to parliament. It is an insult to members of parliament. And that statement, made by no less a person than the national president of the Liberal federation, should be repudiated by the Prime Minister of this country.

Talk about the Liberal party being on a one-way track to the one-party state. According to the national president of the Liberal federation he would like to punish the opposition members for daring to suggest that this is not an all-beneficent government, and that this is not the greatest government anywhere in the world.

**Mr. Ferguson:** He was speaking for the Liberal party.

**Mr. Martin:** When was the speech delivered?

**Mr. Argue:** It was delivered in Ottawa, and I will send it across to the Minister of National Health and Welfare after I have concluded my speech, so that he will have it when he makes his contribution.

**Mr. Martin:** I will be very glad to have it.

**Mr. Argue:** But I say again, Mr. Speaker, that this is further evidence of the attitude of the Liberal party. It is bad enough that we have to deal with statements of policy by the Liberal party and the Liberal government when made in this house. But now, apparently, we are going to have to deal with

more persons making statements outside the house, reflecting on the proceedings of parliament.

I say that that is a statement that will not be forgotten in Canada for many months, and perhaps for many years to come. And I should like the Minister of National Health and Welfare—and again I challenge him—to stand up in this house and tell us not only what he and the government are going to do about unemployment, but whether he agrees with the statements I have quoted, as made by the national president of the Liberal federation of Canada.

Not only does the government offer no solution for the employment problem; now we are being subjected to insult, and the people of Canada who are unemployed are being subjected to this abusive treatment. I have heard it suggested that in this debate the C.C.F. members are conducting something of a filibuster. Well, I suggest that is a much better attitude than the attitude taken by the government, which is to say nothing, fold their arms and hope something will happen to relieve the unemployment situation.

We had two contributions by cabinet ministers. We had the contribution of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Gregg), which was a kind of academic discussion as to whether one set of figures issued by his department was more reliable in interpreting the exact unemployment situation, or whether the other set of figures was more reliable. But in the long speech of the Minister of Labour there was not one sentence on the government's policy to relieve this critical and terrible situation in Canada. There was some very amazing information given in that speech. The minister told us that there were 543,000 applicants for unemployment insurance in January, and that 450,400 persons were receiving unemployment insurance in January, amounting to \$28,400,000 in total. What does that mean by way of income to those persons and those families who have to exist on unemployment insurance and unemployment insurance alone?

Let us assume that each person receiving unemployment insurance has just one dependent and does not have a whole family that has to live on the small unemployment insurance payment. Let us assume that each person's unemployment insurance payment has to maintain only two persons. What does the payment amount to? It amounts to \$31 each for the month of January; in other words, \$1 a day. I tell the Minister of Labour that that kind of a program for the unemployed is a disgrace to Canada; it is a disgrace to the government. A dollar a day is not very much better than the treatment