

is no consolation to the 3,000 people concerned. But it does represent an almost stable situation.

In Ontario, despite the fact that the labour force grew by 99,000, we were able to absorb not only the 99,000 but 4,000 of the unemployed. On the prairies, significantly, there was no change at all. Sixty thousand entered the labour force and 60,000 found jobs. In British Columbia, 38,000 entered the labour force and 43,000 found jobs. In Canada generally, 243,000 people entered the labour force in 1968 and 223,000 found jobs. I have left out one province, but I shall refer to that later. In other words we were short by about 20,000 jobs. That is not really a bad record when one considers that in 1968 was a "catch up" year after the centennial, after the flurry of EXPO and the boom in the construction industry in the greater Montreal area.

Now we come to the one really black mark. I am not going to draw any conclusion as a Quebecker; let others do that. But in the Province of Quebec, 51,000 people entered the work force for the first time and we were able to find in that province only 25,000 jobs. In other words, 26,000 more people were unemployed in the Province of Quebec than at the beginning of the year, though there were only 20,000 more unemployed across the whole of Canada.

It goes without saying that had we been able to balance the figures in Quebec we would have reduced unemployment across the whole of Canada. What are the factors which have generated such a degree of unemployment in my own province? Some people would write it off by saying "separatism". I do not believe it is separatism; I believe international corporations are too callous to be concerned about domestic problems. But uncertainty is one of the factors—lack of leadership, lack of strong statements by Quebec leaders both Liberal and belonging to the Union Nationale. Either they intend to stay in confederation or they intend to get to hell out of it. Unless they know the situation investors are not going to spend money in the province when they can spend it in other parts of Canada where the economic climate and the political situation is more stable. As a Quebecker I would have no hesitation, if I had a million dollars to invest, about investing it in Quebec because I think the results of the last election show without a shadow of a doubt that the overwhelming majority of the people of that province, both French speaking and English speaking, intend and wish to remain in confederation.

Alleged Failure to Reduce Unemployment

Capital, however, is a very flighty thing. It fears socialisms. It fears the uncertainty of the situation in Quebec just as much. So I suspect that when the uncertainty in Quebec has disappeared, perhaps as a result of some strong statements by the political leaders of that province—and I have confidence in their integrity and in their loyalty to this country—the climate of uncertainty will disappear and the capital needed to generate more jobs will be provided in increasing abundance. If that is not the explanation of the situation in Quebec, I am not prepared to say what is. The facts are there and hon. members can read into them precisely what they will.

• (5:20 p.m.)

There was an increase in the total labour force of 51,000 in Quebec. In spite of 25,000 jobs being found, unemployment increased by 26,000. This is a disastrous situation and, as somebody in this debate said, it weakens confederation. Unemployment generates disension, resentment, lack of morale, frustration, fear and uncertainty. These things warp our good sense of judgment. They are things that make the labour force of Quebec susceptible to separatism or other ridiculous philosophies.

We all have a stake in the province of Quebec, not only the Quebeckers. We should all be interested in keeping the country together and in seeing to it that money goes into the province. When we vote moneys for capital expenditures in the Quebec regions, as we will have to do, I will look upon them as an investment in the future of this country.

As usual I wandered away from my notes but I do want to put on the record some statistics in which I think everyone should be interested. I have before me a breakdown of unemployed groups by occupation. Needless to say, not every group is below 5 per cent. The office and professional class represents 1.7 of the unemployed; the transportation, service and recreation, primary and craftsman, production and related workers are all around 5 per cent. The craftsman group is 5.4 per cent. However, the labourers represent 13.2 per cent of the unemployed.

I should like to couple with this the age groups of these people who are unemployed. We find that 9.1 per cent are between the ages of 14 and 19. That, I think, is a pretty sad commentary not only on the federal government, but on the provincial governments, the municipalities and civic authorities, all of whom should realize that people between the