

Mr. Benson: I did not speak.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I hope the hon. member will ask his question. The minister's time will expire in one minute.

Mr. Lundrigan: He needs about 16 hours, but let him have one minute now.

Mr. Gray: I think the government, in the budget speech of my colleague the Minister of Finance outlined the measures which are having and which will have the effect of decreasing unemployment in this country. We are listening to the people in this House and across the country and are keeping the situation under constant review, but I think the point of the budget of the Minister of Finance is that what the government is doing is appropriate for this point in time and that this budget therefore deserves the support of the House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member's time has expired. He may continue only with unanimous consent.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I do not hear unanimous consent.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I was really afraid I might not have time to express the Ralliement Cr ditiste point of view on the budget statement although we have been in the House all day.

Consideration of the budget always allows members to debate the general policy of the country or deal with some specific subject. Today, I should like to take advantage of the opportunity to discuss unemployment, about which much has been said and written and very little done.

In view of the fact that when the debate in the House is on unemployment—and we have had such a debate all day—there is verbal quibbling on the number of unemployed with statistics being wielded back and forth, I should like to speak particularly of the manner in which unemployment statistics are established as I question—and I have very good reasons to do so—the value of figures quoted in the various Dominion Bureau of Statistics reports.

● (9:20 p.m.)

I am familiar with the methods used to compile those statistics. Some 800 persons spend one week every month visiting from 30 to 40 households to gather unemployment statistics. They must visit about eight homes in one work day.

Each investigator is paid \$1.92 per hour, plus 13 cents per mile he travels, or 16 cents per mile if he has business and pleasure insurance coverage. Each investigator must call on the same family every month over a six-month period; six new homes are visited every

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month, and six dropped that were formerly visited over six consecutive months.

It is getting to be a big joke that the same investigator should come for six consecutive months and ask the same household if they are still unemployed and how many hours they worked in the previous week.

Some people may be surprised that heads of households, tired of being bothered by the same investigator for the very same thing, will send their dogs after the statistician at the second or third visit. Then, the man will make up statistics in his car, with figures he estimates by himself, for fear of being bitten by the dog. I know that the third month, when he returns to the same household after finding out at previous interviews that the head of the household was getting annoyed at always being asked the same questions, the investigator feeling embarrassed always having to ask the same questions and since he would run the risk of getting a more or less rude answer as on previous visits, he merely fills his IBM forms with the previous answers or puts in imaginary answers in order not to bother again the investigated household.

Other investigators sometimes keep a copy of the answer given in the questionnaire at the first or second interview and knowing that the household will again be investigated the following month, they complete their forms in advance and make a courtesy call to them during the week, in order to prove their presence. Everything is then concluded and statistics are established.

With such methods, it is stated that the number of unemployed has been computed in Canada. With figures arrived at in such a poor scientific way from a sampling of 3,000 Canadian households per month they talk then in this House, with great compassion, on the most serious problem now—unemployment—leaving aside what is less important for the government, the unemployed in this country.

The 30,000 households "investigated" for six consecutive months constitute about $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of all Canadian households.

If, during these so-called inquiries, an average unemployment rate of 7 per cent was found for households visited for six months, the number of unemployed recorded is multiplied by the ratio represented by the 30,000 households investigated out of a total of 5,180,473-odd Canadian households in 1966.

I have before me the last issue of the Canada Year Book, that is 1969, which is available to every member of this House. One can see there the number of Canadian households visited. This is the latest figure. On which figure and which year does the Dominion Bureau of Statistics base the "guesstimated" number of unemployed in order to supply monthly statistics on the unemployment rate? How is it possible to believe that the figures published by DBS are correct while, on top of all that I already mentioned about the production of statistics, they instruct the 800 investigators who are on the road for a week a month to visit rural districts where there are fewer unemployed, because a farmer who works on his farm in the winter is not unemployed? And in the