

Unemployment Insurance

Canada at that time as being 400,000. He said that he might be conservative, that he personally thought the figure was 500,000, but he was going to work on the figure of 400,000. We have 375,000 unemployed at the present time, plus a number more who are not registered.

I should like to quote some figures from the bureau of statistics and in passing I want to pay my respects to the employees of that branch who show such generous co-operation when requested by members of parliament to assist in the procurement of information. Here are the unemployment figures:

1936	434,300
1937	340,400
1938	411,100

Then here are the figures for 1939, the war year:

January	485,000
February	491,000
March	494,000
April	473,000

An hon. Member: The war was on.

Mr. Shaw: No, the war had not broken out yet, but I will come to that. They were supposed to be getting ready for it. The figures follow:

May	395,000
June	369,000
July	352,000
August	332,000
September	300,000
October	283,000
November	296,000
December	364,000

Only a few moments ago I gave the figure for March of the following year. After asserting in 1935 that unemployment was the hardest cross which any man had to bear, the former leader of the Liberal party went on to say, and he emphasized that he was speaking in the name of Liberalism:

A solution of the unemployment problem must be sought in two directions. Long-range policies and permanent measures must be instituted which, through the revival of trade and industry, will serve to bring about a measure of prosperity. This, of itself, by providing employment, will more effectively than anything else reduce unemployment.

It makes one wonder when he stops to consider what the Liberal party has brought upon us in the field of international trade.

Mr. Kickham: Give us the figures for unemployment while Bennett was in power.

Mr. Shaw: May I suggest that I am not a Conservative nor am I defending any Conservative administration. I have often described on the public platform the period 1930-35 as being one of the bleakest and most dreary five-year periods Canada had ever experienced outside a war period.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): And every other country too.

[Mr. MacInnis.]

Mr. Gardiner: You are not right with regard to the Liberal period in spite of the fact that you say that.

Mr. Shaw: The mere fact that the Minister of Agriculture makes that assertion does not alter fact. I still remember the first six months of 1949 and the assertions he made in various parts of the country. I quote again from that same broadcast in which the former prime minister said, and I ask hon. members to listen to this:

Only by removing the restrictions which have strangled the movement of goods into and out of the country and through persistent and persuasive endeavour to regain markets which have been closed against us, can there be a revival of trade and business, and the return of work for the men and women of our land.

Mr. Gardiner: Give us the figures.

Mr. Shaw: All one has to do is to recall that between 1936 and 1939 we were still in the throes of a depression. We still had unemployment at that time and this whole speech was designed to give assurance to the electors that the Liberals if elected would by the application of those policies correct the situation which existed at that time.

Mr. Gardiner: Mr. Speaker, may I ask my friend to permit me to say that during the period he is speaking of trade went up from 50 per cent to 100 per cent and unemployment went down by 50 per cent.

Mr. Shaw: The former prime minister used the figure 400,000 on August 5, 1935, when he delivered this memorable broadcast, the text of which I now have here between two red covers. He was working on those figures. In 1938, according to the bureau of statistics, we had 411,100 registered unemployed.

Mr. Gardiner: Take the bureau of statistics figures for both periods.

Mr. Shaw: They are bureau of statistics figures.

Mr. Ferguson: You cannot believe even the Liberal figures.

Mr. Shaw: Is the minister implying that the leader of the opposition, as he was at that time, could not possibly be right in his figures?

Mr. Gardiner: I am not saying that.

Mr. Ferguson: The Liberal government is wrong again on the figures.

Mr. Gardiner: Take his figures for both periods and I will still be right. Take either one or the other.

Mr. Shaw: All I have to do is to emphasize that it takes more than an assertion on the part of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr.