

Supply—Labour

Mr. Browne (Vancouver-Kingsway): The hon. member for Essex East is always very glad to quote the Canadian labour congress when it pleases him. Some of the things we have to take into consideration in dealing with this matter are what the government has done, how far it has gone in meeting its responsibility within the area that is open to the government to be able to act. In doing that I think we should compare, as the Canadian Labour Congress has done and with some satisfaction, the difference between Canada and the United States during the recession. I want to quote some of the figures they give to show how much better Canada fared in this situation under our government than was the case in the United States. These are some of the things they bring to the attention of the Canadian public and the working people of the country. I am going to quote from *Labour Research*, a publication of the Canadian Labour Congress, which has this to say in part:

So, though the Canadian and American gross national products started down at the same time, theirs went down appreciably farther than ours, and kept on going down after ours had started up again... Their loss was nearly five times as big as ours.

Then it goes on to say:

So American and Canadian labour income started dropping at the same time, and dropped at about the same rate to the end of 1957. American labour income went on dropping till it reached bottom in April, 1958. Canadian labour income started up again in January, 1958, and kept on rising in February, March, April and May, and again in July, when it reached its new peak. Canadian labour income never dropped as far as American, and came up sooner, faster and farther.

During the course of the debates we have had on the economic situation and labour in this country we have always had it pointed out to us that the United States has a very great influence on Canada, and I think it is remarkable that the actions of the government have made such a better position possible in Canada than is the case in the United States in trying to deal with the very same problem.

So far as these various unemployment insurance commission figures as to unemployment are concerned, the hon. member for Essex East kept on reminding us this morning, as he has done for some time, that there are 700,000 unemployed. He repeated that over and over again. I want to say that I am very thankful that they are able to draw unemployment insurance, and that is no small credit to the present government in view of the time it took to get the amendments to the act through last year and the delay on the part of the opposition that we met at that time.

[Mr. Ricard.]

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Who brought in the Unemployment Insurance Act?

Mr. Ricard: Who caused the obstruction?

Mr. Baskin: I will admit that you did a few things in the 22 years you were in office.

Mr. Browne (Vancouver-Kingsway): As to what they did in the 22 years they were in office, I have a copy here of the remarks of the hon. member for Essex East made on television a short time ago. I am sure most of us saw him on that program. He is so critical of what the government has been able to do in a few months but on this program he thought that 22 years was a very short time for the Liberal party to do anything.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): It was a glorious period in Canadian history.

Mr. Browne (Vancouver-Kingsway): We can all remember that in 1919 they said they were going to bring in a national health scheme but it was not until this government came into office that we got a hospital insurance plan. I think that is making pretty good progress compared with what they did.

To get back to the unemployment figures that I was mentioning, the hon. member for Essex East stated on the television program I mentioned that he did not recognize the high figure he now uses, that he used the bureau of statistics figures and that he did not recognize the figures issued by the unemployment insurance commission. The way he is looking at me I hope he is not going to dispute that because I will read it if he wants me to do so.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I always like to hear my own words.

Mr. Browne (Vancouver-Kingsway): I want to say this, Mr. Chairman. I may not always be right in what I say in the house but when I go somewhere else I will not try to repudiate at a later date what I have said in the house in support of measures put forward by the government. I am stating right now that I think we are doing what we are able to do and I am perfectly willing to support any measure that will help if somebody brings such a measure to my attention. I think the government is doing what it can within its power to take action.

Mr. Deschatelets: Tory times, hard times.

Mr. Browne (Vancouver-Kingsway): We recall the criticism there has been. It is all very well to sit there and say, "Yes, yes, do something". But the next thing they do is to turn around and criticize the government because there is a deficit. I want to say that