



Department of Employment
 Caxton House Tothill Street London SW1H 9NF
 Telephone Direct Line 01-213 4884
 Switchboard 01-213 3000

The Rt Hon Cecil Parkinson MP
 Conservative Central Office
 32 Smith Square
 LONDON
 SW1P 3HH

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Dear Cecil,

I promised to write to you a little while ago in regard to the record of Labour Governments on unemployment. I hope you find the following details interesting.

There have been 5 periods of Labour Government. The following table sets out their details:

	<u>Unemployed</u>	<u>Increase</u>
<u>LABOUR 1</u>		
December 1923	1,229,300	
October 1924	1,280,700	+ 51,400
<u>LABOUR 2</u>		
May 1929	1,165,000	
October 1931	2,792,000	+ 1,627,000
<u>LABOUR 3</u>		
July 1945	131,000	
October 1951	261,500	+ 130,000
<u>LABOUR 4</u>		
October 1964	369,800	
June 1970	600,800	+ 231,000
<u>LABOUR 5</u>		
February 1974	577,700	
May 1979	1,306,100	+ 728,400

Of course, various provisos must be borne in mind. The figures referred to are UK seasonally adjusted, but you will be aware that there is no consistent set of figures

running through from 1923 to the present day. What I have taken is the Department's best published estimates of the UK unemployment figures for the appropriate dates. Clearly there is no problem with the consistency of the figures since the war, but precise figures before the war are slightly more difficult. In particular, between December 1923 and October 1924 there were three different changes of definition of who should be included in the unemployed total (as you can see, Norman is scarcely breaking new ground with his new computerised figures!). What I have done, therefore, is to take for the Labour 1 period the numbers of insured persons unemployed taken from the "Abstract of Labour's Statistics of the United Kingdom 1919 to 1933" published by the Ministry of Labour in 1934. It was from the figures for insured people registering as unemployed that the percentage rate of unemployment was calculated at the time, and thus provides a reasonable and consistent method for measuring the trend of unemployment, although different figures could be obtained for that period depending upon which of the various definitions of unemployment were taken. By May 1929, the anomalies of definition had sorted themselves out.

The record speaks for itself. Every Labour Government has promised to solve unemployment, yet every Labour Government in British history has left office with unemployment higher than when it started. Who could ever trust Labour's promises on unemployment again? I believe this will be one of the crucial facts to ram home between now and the election in order to undermine Labour's credibility and attack on the Government. Labour still isn't working!

As various people have expressed considerable interest in these figures, I am copying this letter to Norman, Ian Gow, Peter Cropper, Dominic Hobson, Chris Lawson, and David Boddy.

Yours ever,

Michael.

MICHAEL DOBBS
Special Adviser to the
Secretary of State