

million to help them, to create an employment tax credit. Are you going to do something, yes or no?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, our intention never was to wait. To the contrary, we have taken action—133,000 jobs created in Montreal within the last three years, and I repeat 133,000—we did our job! The unemployment rate has come down to 9.6 percent from 10.6 percent, Mr. Speaker. We did our job!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. de Cotret: Inaction is on the other side, among those who are blocking Bill C-22—they are preventing the injection of \$700 million in new capital in Montreal, they are stifling the creation of 1,300 new jobs. Join with your colleagues in the other Chamber and have that Bill enacted and see how the 133,000 figure will increase.

Mr. Rossi: Always the same excuse! Bill C-22. Outside of that, nothing for the East end of Montreal, nil!

* * *

REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION

PICHETTE REPORT—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion.

[*English*]

Mr. Murphy: Quiet over there.

An Hon. Member: Shut up!

Mr. Rossi: Shut up yourself, okay?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Both sides have the right idea. The Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Cassidy: Is the Minister aware that there are still 22,000 unemployed in East Montreal? Is the Government ready to follow up on the recommendations of the Pichette Report? What the people of East Montreal want to know is when the Government will follow up on this report to help reduce unemployment in that area.

Hon. Robert de Cotret (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, we are well aware of the problems in East Montreal. These problems have existed for several years. The recommendations of the Pichette Report are now being considered by my Department and I hope to be able to respond to these recommendations in the very near future.

Oral Questions

URGENCY OF SITUATION

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): The Government has now been in power for several years also. It could have responded to the problems of economic recovery in East Montreal for the past three years. Can the Minister explain why, since the publication ten months ago of the Picard Report on the economic future of Greater Montreal, action has been taken only about certain aspects of this report, and the Minister is now promising to respond and take action in the very near future? What does that mean and why is the Government unable to act immediately?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is right to say that we have already followed up on several recommendations contained in the Picard Report. We are now taking action about several other points and we shall be giving a complete response to the Picard Report within a few days.

As for our concern for Greater Montreal, I said earlier that 133,000 new jobs had been created. There has also been a 32 per cent increase in retail sales as well as a marked increase in housing starts and industrial expansion in the Montreal region. This is reflected by the number of building permits. The Montreal region is faring much better now than when the Conservative Government came to power.

* * *

[*English*]

HORTICULTURE

HONEY PRODUCERS—REQUEST FOR COMPENSATION FOR LOST SALES

Mr. Jack Scowen (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. His Department has prevented some honey from being sold in the U.S., testing it so slow that some deals are being cancelled. When can the honey producers expect compensation for lost sales? Is the Canadian Government going to buy the honey from these producers, assist in the replacement of equipment, and take responsibility for all other implications of this action which I estimate will cost \$100 million?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the continuing interest of my hon. colleague in the problems of the honey industry. Canada is not stopping sales in the U.S. The problem is that the U.S. is not accepting our product at the moment. We are trying to work with the people in the industry, the provinces, and our counterparts in the U.S. to develop a plan whereby we have secure access to markets for Canadian products in the U.S.