

stability. Moreover, there is in the mind of the people of Quebec a basic wish of recovering certain powers which are absolutely essential to their own emancipation.

I am always eager to defend, in this house, the interests of Quebec, aware that it is my responsibility and that, with my friends, the liberals, we can manage to build a country in which a viable federalism is possible.

I should like, at this point, to quote a few excerpts from the Speech from the Throne which says many things, but I feel it is always dangerous to limit oneself to reading or listening to grand articles. It has been said: A man is judged not by what he says but by what he does. The people have judged the government and a whole group of members of parliament. Those who might be tempted to interfere with the proper functioning of the house will be judged in turn.

Mr. Speaker, I found the speech of the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) very interesting. His open-mindedness with regard to certain social measures was obvious. He also indicated that the government would introduce measures favourable to the old, measures which I have been requesting for quite some time, one of which notably is the payment of old age security pensions at age 60.

Perhaps can we still hope that in the near future the minister will announce that persons of 60 years of age can receive that pension.

I feel it is my duty to remind the government that it has done much in this respect but, having in mind the present economic situation, it could have achieved more.

In my opinion, we would gain by lowering to 60 the eligibility for old age pensions. I think this would be one method of considerably decreasing unemployment, especially when nearly 400,000 people aged between 60 and 65 belong to the labour force. We have tried for a few years to increase unemployment benefits. A rotten generation which is getting \$100 a week is creating unemployed people who more often as not become revolutionaries. Why not spend this money somewhere else and give a rest to those aged 60 years who deserve it? Granting \$100 a week to a couple instead of one person as it is the case with the social welfare and unemployment insurance, this goal could be realized.

I ask the minister to give serious consideration to this suggestion and to have the eligible age for pension established at 60. This would lead to extraordinary results in the creation of a better social environment. It would be more profitable to create happiness for a 60-year-old person by paying an adequate pension instead of compelling a young person to go and get his pittance at the social welfare office or to draw unemployment insurance benefits. In fact, the employer who would see his workers getting younger would not be unhappy either. His older employees, 60 years old or over, would understand and recognize that their government would have done something proper. In my opinion, it is the government's first responsibility to restore that social climate which is missing here. This is a way to do it and because of the evidence I often hear in my constituency I know that many 60 year olds would be happy to take well deserved holidays. There are more machines and fewer workers. All these reasons

*The Address—Mr. La Salle*

militate for reduction of the eligibility age at 60 for a pension. This would greatly reduce unemployment. I hope that the minister will once more consider my intervention on behalf of these persons who have been waiting for a long time for more income security.

They also mentioned benefits that would be granted to the blind, and considering the extra needs these people may have I really hope that the Minister of National Health and Welfare will act in the fairest way possible as regards this group of people.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak as well of the importance of the economic situation in my constituency. I know that in 1973 the minister of Regional Economic Expansion will change the boundaries of "special areas" and designated areas. My riding has had the advantage of being recognized as an average designated area. This is not the best designation. I know in my riding several people who complain about the establishment of new industries. Of course, supplementary benefits were bestowed on other regions, and I am very glad of it, but I wish to bring these reasons to the minister's attention, because I hope that he will consider the region that I represent, that of Joliette, when in 1973 he will appraise the needs of my region, and that he will take into account the wishes of all of the people who live in this riding. I shall certainly have the opportunity of making representations to his department, and I hope that I will be carefully listened to.

I was pleased as well, Mr. Speaker, to see our government taking an interest in amateur sports. Of course here again a lot has been said about it but very little has been done. And today, it seems that grants to amateur sports will be doubled. I wish to remind the minister once more that until the government spend adequate amounts to provide municipalities with basic tools to enable young people to organize, it will be ridiculous or stupid to speak of improved physical fitness for our youth. We need basic tools; therefore we need money. I mentioned last year a tripartite formula under which financing could be shared by municipalities, the Federal government and Provincial governments. I still believe this would be the best way to enable municipalities to obtain adequate arenas and public swimming pools, etc. But so long as money will be spent on writing fine writs which will remain on shelves, I don't think we shall improve the fitness of our young Canadians.

• (1440)

We shall have a unique opportunity of action at the occasion of the Montreal Olympics of 1976. What is the federal government financial assistance in this connection? No assistance has been announced to date. I request from the government that they grant the Olympic organization the financial assistance they are entitled to.

**Mr. Cyr:** Was it required?

**Mr. La Salle:** I cannot say whether that assistance was already required but I believe that rather secret negotiations have taken place. Anyway, I think parliament should admit the importance of those games. All Canadians willing to participate will be able to do so and not only Montrealers. Consequently, it would be disastrous if Montrealers were the only ones to support those games. I