

Unemployment Insurance

Mr. Starr: I ask this, Mr. Speaker. Is it because of the gloomy predictions of the opposition that the economy is on the upturn? No, certainly not. It is because of the actions of this government; it is because the actions of certain people in this country who have faith and hope in this country are bringing it out of the recession. This will come about regardless of the doom and gloom the Liberal party is spreading around in the hope it will have the desired effect, which is to bring the economy down.

Even the hon. member for Essex East (Mr. Martin)—that great prophet of good times and good cheer—said this in his usual buoyant and optimistic way:

I would hope it is an indication that forces of growth are present that might lead to an end of the recession—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Hear, hear.

Mr. Pickersgill: Hear, hear.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): They were very good words.

Mr. Starr: He, too, can now see that the actions of this government and the measures which have been taken by this government are bringing about results and will bring about greater results in the months and years ahead.

The hon. member has no alternative but to turn around and admit it, as he has done in the past. I hope he will do so in the future, because I think the future of this country and its economy is much greater than he or I.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I agree, because we will have a new government pretty soon.

Mr. Robichaud: Not a new vision, but a new government.

Mr. Ricard: You hope.

Mr. Starr: I should say, Mr. Speaker, that no government has ever worked as hard as the present government to bring about this buoyancy in our economy.

Mr. Pickersgill: Eighteen hours a day.

Mr. Starr: There are more people working today than ever before. Those same people are earning more, spending more and saving more money than ever before in the history of this country. I will say, as did my colleague the Postmaster General (Mr. Hamilton) that there are 500,000 more Canadians working today than there were when the Liberals were put out of office.

I would also point out to hon. members opposite that you cannot deal with unemployment in terms of actuarial considerations alone. We are dealing with men and women, Canadian citizens bringing up their children,

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

sending their children to school. These are the people with whom we are dealing and we are very conscious of it. If I must choose between actuarial considerations and the alleviation of misery for Canadians, my decision will always be in favour of those Canadians.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillington): I know it is going to be a bitter disappointment to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Starr) that his prognostication as to who would follow him has turned out to be wrong, and instead of listening to the eloquence of the hon. member for Essex East (Mr. Martin) he is going to listen to the faltering words of the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillington.

Mr. Starr: I am disappointed.

Mr. Pickersgill: I am sure the minister is disappointed, but I hope his disappointment will not be too long sustained. Before I deal with some of the things the minister said, I want to refer to an exceedingly naive observation made last evening by the parliamentary secretary to the minister (Mr. Thrasher) at the very opening of his remarks, because these words appear most strange to me after all the resounding declarations about the rights of parliament and especially the rights of the opposition which we used to hear from the Prime Minister (Mr. Diefenbaker). Said the parliamentary secretary as reported at page 4522 of *Hansard*:

Mr. Speaker, once again we find the opposition introducing an amendment to a motion to go into supply under a guise that is purposely designed to permit them to make an attack on government policy—

Some hon. Members: Read on.

Mr. Pickersgill: I shall be happy to read on. It continues:

—on government policy with regard to employment in this country.

An hon. Member: Nothing to do with the amendment.

Mr. Pickersgill: What, may I ask, does the hon. gentleman think parliament is for? What does he think an opposition is for? Does he think that we on this side of the house, like the hon. gentleman and those around him, are a lot of rubber stamps or “yes” men or trained seals? Did the hon. gentleman wish to intervene?

Mr. Thrasher: I was wondering whether the hon. gentleman wished to have an answer to the question he just posed?

Mr. Pickersgill: My question was a purely rhetorical one and I leave the hon. gentleman to make any kind of answer that his essay writer is able to think up for him.