

Unemployment Measures Lacking

I would like most of all that we try to look into problems with objectivity. I think that members of the opposition, as well as my colleagues on this side of the house, will mostly express their views by suggesting solutions to such a serious problem as unemployment.

I have heard this afternoon several members blaming the government for its inaction and its apparent inability to solve the unemployment problems since it came into power.

I intend in a moment to state more objectively what the government has done and what it intends to do. I could also, perhaps, from a strictly personal point of view, state my opinion on the long term policy of the government in the economic field.

Mr. Speaker: As it is six o'clock, it is now time to take recess.

[Text]

At six o'clock the house took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at 8 p.m.

[Translation]

Mr. Maurice Sauve (Iles-de-la-Madeleine): Mr. Speaker, I think I may start my remarks by paying a particular tribute to the Minister of Labour (Mr. MacEachen) who, I think, is held in esteem by all hon. members in this house.

We heard him answer, with great tact and felicity, all questions hon. members wanted to ask him. We heard him discuss the problem of trusteeship for the seamen's unions, and, during the intercession, saw him try hard to find a private solution for that extremely serious problem which might have led to a settlement. We have seen him rise in this house to explain his position at the time of the seamen's strike or during the dockers' walk-out. He took a very firm attitude, and I think that all hon. members here are proud that Canada should have such a Minister of Labour.

I would be remiss, at a moment where an amendment is being discussed in connection with his department, not to take a few minutes in order to stress those facts.

It has been said, this afternoon, that the government had not taken all necessary measures to relieve unemployment. That statement is partly true and partly false. It seems to me, that to be fair and truthful it would be well briefly to list the various measures announced by the government since it came into power. All that legislation was more

particularly aimed at relieving winter unemployment and all unemployment in the near future, and some provisions aimed at putting an end to unemployment over a longer period.

All members will readily agree that unemployment is actually the most serious problem at the present time. It is the source of many of our difficulties as I will show later on.

Allow me to read a list that I put together very hastily showing what the government has done or intends to do in the near future in order to alleviate unemployment. It was never claimed in the house that these measures would altogether solve the unemployment problem.

Some special measures were first announced to help areas called designated areas. Those measures affected 35 areas—10 or 12 were added subsequently—where the federal government will pay 60 per cent of labour costs for winter works and provide an additional sum of \$7 million for emergency winter works.

An assistance program has also been announced for new industries in those areas whereby income tax will only be collected three years after the new firms have been established, and special depreciation has been provided for new equipment and buildings.

I think those measures are already producing results in those areas. In my riding of Iles-de-la-Madeleine, for instance, if I may be allowed to refer to it for a moment or two, winter works for more than \$600,000, will be carried out which will do away with all unemployment there for seven or eight weeks. Should weather permit, we might be able to extend the projects into January and February.

The government, after much difficulty, had its municipal aid legislation adopted. That measure will help municipalities to carry out immediately certain projects which otherwise would have been delayed.

The special allowance of \$500 for those who build houses in wintertime will allow us, I think, to reduce unemployment during winter.

The important wheat sales now taking place will undoubtedly increase employment in the field of transportation and in certain allied industrial areas.

The new government policy concerning the importation and exportation of automobile parts will help the economy of this country.

The new regulation governing technical training will also help.

The new policy pertaining to assistance for older workers will stimulate the re-employment of workers 45 years and over and will likely allow a certain number of those workers to go back to work.