

Unemployment Insurance

the former government in 1950. We extended it by two months. We changed the formula. I believe that the amendment at that time was piloted through by the hon. member for Essex East,—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): That is right.

Mr. Starr:—who was then acting on behalf of the then minister of labour.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): We never had unemployment as this government has had it.

Mr. Ricard: You mean horses were on the payroll?

Mr. Starr: In the circumstances, Mr. Speaker, I feel that it ill behoves hon. members opposite at this time to talk and act as though they had never heard of these things. We extended this provision; and I am not worried about saying that. I think we did a great deal of good by it. We helped people through a trying period. We did it when hardships were in prospect as the result of a continent wide recession, not one just confined to Canada.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Twelve per cent in this country; 8 per cent in the United States.

Mr. Starr: Now they tell us we should further extend the act by including casual labour. The hon. member for Essex East just interjected percentages. I wonder whether he has studied—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I am sorry to interrupt the minister but I must inform him that his time has expired.

Mr. Pickersgill: Surely, the minister has unlimited time. He is the minister replying.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: If there is no objection, the minister may continue.

Mr. Pickersgill: Let the minister continue.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): But not to an unlimited extent.

An hon. Member: Stick together, boys.

Mr. Starr: The hon. member for Essex East just interjected percentages. I did not catch the full impact of those percentages.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I said—

Mr. Starr: It does not matter.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): What I said was that in Canada—

Mr. Starr: It does not matter. I wish to point out to the hon. member that, in those states on the borders of Canada having the same climatic conditions as we have here in Canada, the percentage of unemployment is

[Mr. Starr.]

far greater than is the national average in this country and more than double what it is in Ontario.

Mr. Ricard: Under a good Conservative government.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Let us not worry about that. Let us do something here at home.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Starr: If the hon. member would permit me to take the time of the house in order to go into detail and to enumerate and discuss in full detail the measures this government has taken since November 17, I should be only too glad to put them on the record since he has now made the remark "let us go ahead and do something about it" and has asked what the government has done.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): We know what you have done, and you have done very little. It is a disgrace.

Mr. Starr: I will confine myself to the amendments. Both these amendments are designed to bring forward the question of unemployment, and at the same time deprive the government of the opportunity of saying what is being done about it, as I said a moment ago.

The C.C.F. subamendment talks about "abnormal unemployment". These are the words you will find in their subamendment. Any substantial unemployment is abnormal as far as this government is concerned, and we are taking the most far-reaching steps ever taken in the economic history of this country by any government since confederation to deal with it.

As an example, in the present fiscal year we are providing for expenditures of more than \$742 million in government acquisition and construction to help the economic situation. I submit this will help to deal with abnormal unemployment. I am directing my remarks only to the words which appear in the subamendment.

There are other encouraging items in the daily press which will have their effect on abnormal unemployment as referred to in the subamendment. Again, from last night's Toronto Daily Star which as all hon. members know makes a habit of stressing the brighter side of the news as far as this government is concerned, there is an article which says:

From Vancouver—a \$76 million copper order from Japan for British Columbia.

This will have an effect on abnormal unemployment.

Mr. Winch: Starting when?