

permit the dominion government to assume that a nation-wide system of unemployment insurance could be established on the basis proposed by Mr. Duplessis.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Does the minister assume that the dominion government must be blocked indefinitely because of the attitude of one group in one province?

Mr. ROGERS: I am not sure how my time is passing, but I think I shall have an opportunity to answer that before I have finished. I mention Quebec at this point because it is one of the great industrial provinces of the dominion, and naturally its views are of particular importance at this time. I find it difficult to understand why Premier Duplessis, speaking for his government of course, should take a position of opposition to a national scheme of unemployment insurance. He is not speaking for the workers of the province of Quebec when he takes that position. For three years in succession the confederation of Catholic workers have urged the Quebec government to give their consent to a constitutional amendment which would permit the enactment of a national scheme of unemployment insurance. The Trades and Labour Congress of Canada, through its affiliated organizations in the province of Quebec, have made representations along precisely the same lines. Nor has Mr. Duplessis in opposing a national scheme of unemployment insurance been expressing the views of any royal commission set up in his province to consider the interests of the people of Quebec in relation to unemployment insurance. To my knowledge the only commission set up in the province of Quebec to deal with this question was one established in 1933 under the chairmanship of Professor Edouard Montpetit. In addition to this distinguished chairman, there were as members of that commission a number of men outstanding in the industrial and cultural life of the province. I am going to put a list of them on *Hansard* because I believe the views they expressed are those which lie in the hearts of the majority of the people of the province of Quebec in connection with this question. The members of the commission were:

The Right Reverend Georges Courchesne, D.D. (Rome)—

Bishop of Saint-Germain-de-Rimouski; emeritus professor in the faculty of arts of Laval university.

The Venerable Frederick George Scott, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.A., D.C.L. (Bishop's), D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.C.—

Archdeacon of Quebec; rector of St. Matthew's church, Quebec.

John T. Foster—

President of the trades and labour council of Montreal; member of the trades and labour congress of Canada; managing editor of the Canadian Congress Journal.

G rard Tremblay—

Deputy Minister of Labour, province of Quebec; late secretary general of the national Catholic labour unions.

Alphonse Lessard, M.D., officier de l'instruction publique—

Provincial director of charities and director of the provincial bureau of health; professor of sanitary legislation in the faculty of medicine of Laval university.

Georges-Arthur Savoy—

President of the Dominion Blank Book Company, Limited, St. Johns, Quebec; president of the Quebec division, Canadian Manufacturers' Association.

That was the commission on social insurance which made its report in 1933. The conclusions of the commission are very brief, and I shall place them on *Hansard*. They were.

1. The social insurance commission believes that unemployment is a problem above all national and international in character, with respect both to its causes and the remedies which it demands.

2. Unemployment insurance, although, according to the law, it falls under the jurisdiction of the provinces, and although in theory it is applicable within the provincial administration, cannot, for the reasons offered in this report, be efficiently organized except in a nation-wide manner.

That represents the considered views of a royal commission set up in the province of Quebec to consider this question. May I remind the house that so far as I am aware the chairman of that commission which gave that opinion has not in any way given any public expression of alteration of that opinion. Quite recently he was chosen by Premier Duplessis as the chairman of a taxation commission within that province. It is quite evident that that previous commission was not and could not be regarded as being in the nature of a partisan commission.

Mr. WERMENLINGER: What was his name?

Mr. ROGERS: Professor Edouard Montpetit of the university of Montreal.

May I say this further, again because I find it difficult to understand the basic reasons for this alleged opposition of the province of Quebec to a nation-wide scheme of unemployment insurance: There are those who in one breath say, and are saying, that unemployment is a national problem, and who in the next breath are ready to refuse to give the dominion power to deal with unemployment by the method of insurance. It is extremely difficult to understand the consistency of those two points of view expressed, as I have said, in the province of Quebec.