

Unemployment Measures Lacking

of Finance. I am sure of one thing: He could not do any worse, and he has got a lot of help.

The opposition of that time spoke of that anaemic child, the winter works incentive program. They were not satisfied with the 150,000 to 200,000 jobs provided every winter by that program. They said: Let us make modifications to the winter works program. Where are these modifications? I know the Minister of Labour (Mr. MacEachen) is looking at me as if to say I do not know very much. I know that in his wisdom and following the dictates of his advisers he has proposed that with respect to the winter works program in certain designated areas—and the subject of designated areas is a very touchy one—the federal contribution be increased from 50 to 60 per cent. As far as I can see, that is the main modification that has been brought forward by the government, which was going to revamp completely that great, successful program initiated by the Conservative government when it was in power and which has contributed greatly to the maintenance of a decent amount of employment throughout the country in the winter months.

These are some of the main proposals. There is one more proposal which is dear to the heart of the Secretary of State for External Affairs. He also proposed that the excise tax on automobiles be abolished. Our government did that. It did not require a Liberal government to be in power for that to be done.

These are some of the measures that were proposed by the former opposition members now occupying the treasury benches. As you can readily see from the summary of the measures that I have put before you, Mr. Speaker, none of them has been implemented in an effective way by the present government, which has been noted not for its drive or its constructive proposals but more for its confusion and its dilly-dallying.

[Translation]

The Minister of Justice, when he was on this side of the house, was also quite prolific and proposed means to deal with unemployment.

I remember a brilliant speech he made at the time he was but the member for Laurier, on March 2, 1960, and which is to be found beginning at page 1651 of *Hansard*.

The hon. member for Laurier had proposed some 25 measures to remedy the unemployment situation. Well, his government has been in office for six months—it is no longer a matter of 60 days but rather of several hundred days—and the proposals the hon. member was enumerating at that time to deal with unemployment have not been

adopted, except those the Conservative government, which was in office until April of this year, did adopt.

I am quite sure the minister has not forgotten that eloquent and vibrant speech, and I do not have to insist too much and set down the proposals he put forth. The fact remains that, the moment these hon. gentlemen are given full authority to act, they seem to forget all about those suggestions, recommendations, measures and means. They hang on to obsolete ideas or extend a recovery program launched by the previous administration.

And even the present ineffable Minister of Public Works (Mr. Deschatelets) who was then member for Maisonneuve-Rosemont, ventured to make some remarks on the unemployment situation. As we may see on page 4167 of the official record for May 23, 1960, he was shocked to see such a great number of people at the unemployment insurance office in the city of Montreal.

He had good reason to be shocked, but he might use his camera today and take the same photos—or even let him forget his photographer's talent for a few weeks and try the same experiment the next few months. He will see then that the situation remains exactly the same, because the government of which he is part has been unable to elaborate a program to remedy the present situation.

As we may read on page 4169 of *Hansard* for May 23, 1960, the present minister said then:

What did the Conservative government do to try and maintain employment at a reasonable level in Canada?

And now we may ask: "What did the present government do to try and maintain employment and jobs in this country at a reasonable level"?

And the hon. member added:

What interest did this government show in avoiding a deterioration of the employment situation to the point I mentioned a few moments ago when quoting the last figures?

Indeed, what interest does the Liberal government show in this problem?

And the hon. member said further:

To what extent did the government listen to the admonitions and warnings which it so frequently heard from the opposition?

Mr. Speaker, why do those gentlemen, who have a good memory and are not without intelligence, not pull themselves together and recall the words and suggestions they made at the time when they were sitting on this side of the house?

Mr. Deschatelets: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member allow me a question?