

*Alleged Failure to Reduce Unemployment*

Governments have passed a great number of laws, and labour is no doubt better protected today than it used to be. However, things are still far from perfect and will probably never be. I therefore share the fears of the opposition.

I do admit it might be possible, now, to improve the situation. So, how are we going to tackle this new regional development? I think our attitude is going to be slightly different from that of the federal government, so far, whether Conservative or Liberal.

Our efforts will probably aim—I am not referring to the possible content of a bill, but to some ideas that sometimes come into my mind—at developing centres of growth rather than expanding our resources in a huge area, at the risk of losing them. We should indeed try to concentrate our resources so as to provide each and every area, with poles of growth towards which those who seek employment would normally be attracted.

For instance, I find it absolutely unbelievable that almost all the Maritimes should be designated areas, except Halifax and a few other centres such as Dartmouth-Halifax and St. John, which had a normal trend toward development. Those cities were the only ones to be denied government grants for industrial development.

The same thing is happening in the province of Quebec. One of the most important human communities in the Quebec area, I mean the city of Quebec, is not developing though it is the natural center of a huge area that extends as far as the Lower St. Lawrence region. But the city of Quebec cannot benefit from the subsidies granted by the federal government.

The situation is the same for several other cities in the Maritimes, and in Newfoundland, of course. That explains the delay. We are seeking a new philosophy, to see if there may not be new ways of putting an end to unemployment in Canada or, at least, of reducing it, and seeing to it that its impact on human beings is not as severe as it has been in the past. I doubt that these will be magic measures.

I read the speech of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) in which he says: At last, we have the formula. I know the Progressive Conservative program, and I admit it has some good points. However, I feel that the Leader of the Opposition is being very optimistic when he is so sure that those measures will produce the results he

[Mr. Marchand (Langelier).]

mentions. If it were possible, I would put him in office for three months to try out his formulas, after which time we might be able to have a more objective discussion. But, in any event, we will not run that risk. If that is the result of progressive-conservative party thinking, so much the better. I am even willing to use as a source of inspiration the good ideas suggested by the opposition. But, I doubt that anyone has found the magic formula, especially in Canada, which is a huge country, and very difficult to govern.

● (4:30 p.m.)

Some claim that a speedier or stronger intervention on the part of the State could put an end to unemployment. I should like to ask Mr. Wilson, the Prime Minister of England, how he managed to solve the unemployment problem in the United Kingdom, because, at the time of the monetary crisis he was forced, no less, to create systematic unemployment in England. I do not blame him. He was forced to do it and I suppose any other responsible government would have had to take similar steps. However, we know that Mr. Wilson's speeches, when he was a member of the opposition and told the government how to put an end to unemployment in England, and those he delivers now as head of the government, are different. It is the same man, undoubtedly as honest and as intelligent in both cases, but he is now faced with difficulties, and he does what he can.

One can accuse the government of not having found the magic formula and, I think, rightly, because we have not found it. But we cannot be accused of not making the necessary efforts to solve that problem.

I do not intend to speak of considerable economic planning, or to establish far-reaching programs which would apply from Halifax to Vancouver, to create in our country prosperity and growth on a permanent basis. However, I intend, when the department is created, to introduce in the house new measures which will enable us to grapple more realistically with that crucial and fundamental problem which has not yet been solved.

Partial attempts were made when I was Minister of Manpower. We amended the Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act so as to be able to look after a new type of unemployed, the technological unemployed laid off because there are no more jobs for them. Not only that, but their trades are no longer useful in a modern economy.