

*The Address—Mr. Bourbonnais*

in the matter of credit which, in some fields is excessive, with attendant dangers of growing inflation, while in other cases it is restricted to the point of paralysing industries which otherwise could activate an easily marketable production and create jobs for thousands of workers.

There are evidently other causes for lack of buying power, which it would be useless to discuss at this time, because they are only corollaries of those already mentioned.

Now production, foreign and domestic markets, credit, buying power and over-production, all these aspects come under federal jurisdiction.

This government intends to embark on a public works policy in order to check unemployment. Without rejecting this suggestion, I do not believe that such public expenses which, after all, are carried by the taxpayer, will bring about the immediate alleviation of unemployment which it demands. The very planning and preparation of such projects call for a period of several months. They may also make necessary a migration of people who, when the project has been completed, will again be unemployed if other local industries are unable to absorb this labour force when it becomes available.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that serious consideration should be given to the buying power of the consumer and to his needs, on the domestic as well as on the foreign market. I also believe that producers should be guided by results thus obtained, as to the nature, the volume and the distribution of their production; and that foreign trade should be directed to the countries needing our goods or which, in their turn, are able to sell us the essential commodities we lack.

Those principles are extremely simple but nevertheless hold the key to the unemployment problem.

To those considerations may be added some practical suggestions, for instance the development of small industries, giving the economy a greater individual flexibility by maintaining a class of craftsmen assured of their living, as the fate of the working classes often depends upon the destiny of a single day; care that credit does not unduly sustain the production of articles that might not sell, or that credit does not pave the way for another frightful evil, inflation.

In order to increase at once the purchasing power, several steps come to mind, such as: (a) immediate tax exemption at all levels, which is less liable to produce inflation than public expenditures and which, through the

resumption of business, will in no way affect the treasury, since it will bring about an increase in tax collection at the lower levels, which will offset any losses incurred at the higher levels; (b) extend family allowances until age 18 for students; (c) grant unemployment insurance benefits to those who must quit their work because of illness; (d) grant the old age assistance benefits to widows and spinsters as soon as they reach the age of 60.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the problem of unemployment is, by its very nature, the most alarming problem a government has to deal with in domestic affairs; this is a problem which bears upon its conscience, whether it likes it or not.

The right hon. Prime Minister promised to solve this problem if the people would give him their confidence. He now has this confidence, as well as all available means to put an end to this distressing situation which, in our country, after 22 years of prosperity, of security which we have known under the governments of Mr. Mackenzie King and Mr. St. Laurent, is a challenge to democracy and to mankind.

(Text):

**Mr. Marcel Bourbonnais (Vaudreuil-Soulanges):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the population of Vaudreuil-Soulanges riding which I represent, I wish to offer you my most sincere congratulations upon your election to the high office you now hold. I wish to offer the same mark of respect to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration (Mrs. Fairclough); the Minister of Defence Production (Mr. O'Hurley); the Secretary of State (Mr. Courtemanche) for their appointments to cabinet posts. I should like also to join with other members in extending congratulations to the Deputy Speaker, the hon. member for Longueuil (Mr. Sevigny). May I add my words of appreciation to those of other hon. members for the wonderful address moved by the hon. member for Quebec-Montmorency (Mr. Lafreniere), seconded by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen).

I should like to express to this house the gratitude I owe to the people of my county for the confidence they have put in me, and may God help me to represent them with respect and dignity. The riding of Vaudreuil-Soulanges has four times elected your predecessor in the chair, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the whole house to be lenient and not judge him too harshly in the light of the