

Employment Support Bill

20,000 workers per year. Yet, more than 100,000 are looking for jobs in the various trades. Consequently there is a period of unemployment, in Canada as well as elsewhere, which will make the country poorer, because it is being deprived of the energy of a number of workers, and automatically it is the whole country that suffers.

Moreover, this situation leads to some rivalry between federal and Quebec manpower centres, and workers are not always the better for it. It is unfortunate to see that manpower centres in "la belle province" are set up to serve the population and the workers but the competition does not always help provide the services workers are entitled to expect. That is why we sometimes have trouble getting some contractors to welcome people we recommend upon request. Officials of Quebec manpower offices resent the fact that the recommendation comes from a member of Parliament. Things should not happen this way, but such is the situation in several cases.

As early as July 1970, long before the 10 per cent surtax was imposed by Americans, a newspaper indicated that this government's policy had driven the country in to an unemployment crisis. In *Le Droit* of Ottawa, on May 8, 1971, one could read the following:

Last night, Prime Minister Trudeau stated that unemployment constituted the most serious failure that his government had suffered during its three years in office.

The Prime Minister had been questioned during the televised program called "Format 60" on the CBC French network and he admitted that unemployment had followed, in part, the government's battle against inflation that he felt he had won.

Maybe we gained a little in the field of battle against inflation, but at the same time the problem of unemployment has been aggravated. The Prime Minister went on to say:

Our fight against inflation was a success, but it had a disruptive effect in terms of a deplorable increase in unemployment.

Those are the words of the hon. member for Bellechasse, but he is repeating what the Prime Minister said. So I hope we will not be accused of resorting to small politics. We are merely verifying the effects of a policy over the Canadian economy.

On May 12, 1971, a certain newspaper had this to say:

At least 17,000 Montrealers have been laid off in 1970. This is based on figures compiled by the press and data released by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics on the employment situation in 1969-1970.

On the following day, a heading in the Montreal newspaper *La Presse* read as follows:
10,000 new jobs only last year.

So we can draw the following comparison: far from progressing we are receding.

In its May 18, 1971 issue *La Presse* said—quote:

Unemployment has a tendency to become chronic and to drag on. As a result, there will be in Quebec, by 1980, an estimated total increase of 670,000 workers, and if we want to lessen unemployment by half from now until then, we must create at least an average of 75,000 to 77,000 new jobs each year.

This is also the statement made by Quebec Labour Minister Cournoyer when he sketched the present labour

[Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse).]

situation in Quebec before the members of various south-shore social clubs assembled in Saint-Lambert.

Another politician, as reported in the newspaper *Montreal-Matin*, January 19, 1971, said that we must create at least 65,000 jobs annually if we want to absorb the workers who will invade the labour market each year.

Finally, in the newspaper *Le Devoir*, on May 26, 1971, one could read the following:

Some textile workers blame the federal policy. Criticism of the federal government policy in the textile area was the opening topic yesterday, in Joliette, of the congress of the Canadian Federation of Textile Workers.

The director of services of the Federation, Mr. Lacaille, in his report to the delegates pointed out that the federal policy in matters of textiles would prove useless in the distant future as long as the government does not take the necessary steps to curb erosion of the Canadian market by the developing countries.

Mr. Speaker, here are the problems. The United States want to protect themselves against foreign products entering the country; Canada, for its part, through its organizations, has long been urging the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin) to adopt protective measures in order to safeguard our textile industries and ensure work for our labour force.

At the very moment when the government was announcing such a policy, Mr. Lacaille recalled, such imports were resulting in nearly 1,600 dismissals in eight Quebec textile products manufacturing plants. And since then, Mr. Speaker, many people are aware of it, the Canadian textile industry, and especially that of the province of Quebec, has experienced difficult times as a result of regular and large imports.

That is one reason why the Chemcell Company Limited announced, a few months ago, the eventual closing down of its plant in Montmagny, in the constituency of Bellechasse which I represent. And if that plant really closes down, 400 workers at least will be laid off.

Here again, this is a result of the lack of foresight on the part of the government as regards international trade. On that, I am tempted to quote a Liberal senator, chairman of the Senate committee on poverty, senator Croll. I think he showed courage when he informed the government of the result of its policies in the following words:

Unemployment, like poverty, is not what it used to be and neither one nor the other will be tolerated in this country.

He went on:

The government chose one evil, high unemployment, to fight another one, inflation. Both have a certain value but at this time, that of unemployment is not only monetary but social, and is quite a blow at human dignity and hope.

As an example, the senator referred to a 40-year old family man owner of a house and of a car and having some obligations. All of a sudden, he is unemployed, laid off without any hope of getting another job soon. "Where can a 40-year-old man get a new job in our present society" asked the senator.

During the question period today, a member asked whether there would soon be an opportunity program for older people. That seemed perhaps a little amusing but we will have to take things seriously again and consider