

Mr. McCleave: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The motion was seconded by the hon. member for Saint Hyacinthe (Mr. Ricard). I would have been very pleased to have been identified with it, he is the second.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): The record will be changed accordingly.

• (2:20 p.m.)

[Translation]

Hon. Théogène Ricard (Saint-Hyacinthe): Mr. Speaker, I should like to start my remarks by reading the motion under consideration:

That this House condemns the Government (a) for its failure to provide a program of full employment, (b) for its discriminatory and ineffective manpower policies, and (c) for its destructive labour relations with its own employees.

Mr. Speaker, in the light of existing conditions, I believe it would have been difficult to find a more appropriate motion than this one which is complemented by the amendment moved by my friend from Cape Breton-The Sydneys (Mr. Muir).

Mr. Speaker, in 1965, three new men arrived on the federal political scene to join the Liberals. Until they took their final decision, these three doves, as they are called, were not known for their unflinching faith in the ideas of the Liberal party. They were identified rather with the CCF party or the NDP.

An hon. Member: Or with the Progressive Conservative party.

Mr. Ricard: Considering the past of these three newcomers, the workers could have rightly expected that their problems would be rapidly solved in the future.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), for one, played a very active role, as everybody knows, in the famous strike of the asbestos miners. He identified himself at the time with the interests of the workers and once arrived here, as Prime Minister, the workers would have had the right to expect from him that he would take care of them in a very special manner. As far as the Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier) is concerned, he also is recognized as an old trade-unionist because of the part he took in the CBC strike. And the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand) made his first appearance in public life with the CNTU and achieved an enviable reputation which is recognized by everyone.

Alleged Failure of Employment Policies

Those three newcomers on the federal scene held important positions with the unions. They therefore owe much to the working class. It is surprising, Mr. Speaker, to note that in 1970, the three doves, as some took pleasure in calling them, instead of helping the working class which had supported them, so to speak, for so many years, should have decided to turn their backs on them. Is it any wonder then, Mr. Speaker, that the reputation of those three gentlemen, each of whom holds a very important post within the Canadian government, should deteriorate constantly. Most of the workers are sorry they trusted those three gentlemen. Several of them even see treachery in the present attitude of one of them in particular, namely the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion.

I am sorry he is not here in the House now, because I have a message to convey to him on behalf of the workers of my riding which is going through a depression such as it has never known before. The words I will use might be a bit harsh. However, this must be made known, and I would not change them if he were here. I am even sorry he is not in the House, because it would give me some pleasure in saying them in his presence. Because of the roster system which has been adopted, this is not one of his days to be in the House. But I must not, because of that, be deprived of making my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to dwell for a few moments on the present situation of the working class. The most recent statistics, as published by the Federal Bureau of Statistics on February 21 last, reveal that there were at that time 526,000 unemployed Canadians. In the province of Quebec alone, there are 195,000 unemployed at the present time, which represents 8.7 per cent of the Quebec labour force. The unemployment rate for Canada as a whole is 6.5 per cent.

According to an inquiry made by the JOC (Young Catholic Workers' Association) among the young workers in the province of Quebec, there are 57,000 unemployed young people. Which means that one young Quebecer out of ten is unemployed at the present time and that young people represent 42 per cent of the unemployed in Quebec. What will happen in a few months from now? Students will begin their holidays and will also invade the labour market, looking for a job so as to be able to pay a part of their fees. It is just too bad, but many of those 640,000 new job seekers