

*Unemployment Measures Lacking*

**Hon. Paul Martineau (Pontiac-Temisca-vingue):** Mr. Speaker, I should like first of all to congratulate the hon. member for Îles-de-la-Madeleine (Mr. Sauve) on the forceful speech he has just delivered but most of which was unfortunately irrelevant. That is why I shall not try to follow along the same lines. However, I was happy to hear him state in connection with unemployment and the economic situation, that he was not entirely satisfied with the action taken by the government of which he is a supporter. I am glad he said that because, last year, when the number of unemployed was about the same as this year, he bitterly criticized the government for what he called its inaction.

We have today the same situation which, far from improving, has become worse since the hon. members opposite—

**An hon. Member:** That is not true.

**Mr. Martineau:**—have come into power. The hon. member for Îles-de-la-Madeleine dealt with the problem mainly with regard to the province of Quebec of which he spoke very feelingly, and I commend him for it.

If we look at the figures issued by the dominion bureau of statistics and compare statistics for August and September 1962, with the figures for the same months in 1963, we find that in August last year there were 96,000 unemployed in the province of Quebec, whereas there were 97,000 in September.

This year, that is in 1963, in the province of Quebec, under a Liberal regime, in Ottawa as well as in Quebec, we still unfortunately, find Quebec reaching the highest level of unemployment, namely 108,000 in August 1963 and still the same figure in September last, that is 5.5 per cent in August and 5.7 per cent in September.

Then I hope that as a result of his argument, the hon. member for Îles-de-la-Madeleine, will find sympathetic support among the members of the government, several of whom come from the province of Quebec, who have been listening in silence.

The hon. member said that our party, that we, of the opposition, should support the government and not cause delays in the passing, to use his own words, "of legislation essential to the economic progress of our country" which are brought forward.

I perfectly agree with that. But may I ask the hon. member where are those measures? What are they? Far from relieving unemployment in the province of Quebec, they only increase it? If he has an answer to that, it is that among those now occupying the treasury benches, there are better economists than those who usually show off.

**Mr. Deschatelets:** Would the hon. member allow me a question?

**Mr. Martineau:** Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to hear the Minister of Public Works now, but if there are a few minutes left at the end of my observations, it will be a pleasure to reply to the hon. minister because that is a matter of courtesy.

**Mr. Caron:** It is only to enlighten you.

[Text]

**Mr. Martineau:** I have been looking over the subamendment. I think it would be unfair to say the members of the present administration are not conscious of the problem of unemployment. As a matter of fact, when they were on this side of the house they spoke of nothing else. They could think of nothing else and could find no other subject on which to entertain the house than the subject of unemployment.

Today they do not care to speak about it. It is swept beneath the rug. Unhappily, though, the problem is still with us; it has not been solved by those masterminds opposite. If anything, it is likely to be more serious than ever during the coming winter months, precisely because of the failure of the government to take effective new measures to deal with the situation. When I say hon. gentlemen who now grace the treasury benches have a concern for unemployment, I should have said they had a concern about unemployment when they were over on this side of the house. One of those who expressed the most concern was the gracious Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin). You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that at that time the hon. member for Essex East was the main critic of the official opposition in matters of labour, employment and unemployment. As a matter of fact, he made several contributions on this particular subject which are recorded in *Hansard*. I cite a few extracts at random from the inspired words of the hon. member for Essex East, now Secretary of State for External Affairs. I might say that he was vastly concerned with the problem, so much so that on the 2nd of February, 1960, as recorded at page 645 of *Hansard*, he had the audacity, I think, to single out Canada as "the one country in the western world where, in spite of our resources and great industrial capacity and the capacity of our people, there has persisted continuously since the fall of 1957 the most serious unemployment problem of any country in the western world".

Sir, if the situation then was as described by that hon. member, then I say it is every bit as serious now because statistics prove there has been no improvement since. In the course of the same speech the hon. member