

*Supply—Labour*

**Mr. Chevrier:** I thank the minister for that intervention. I wonder whether the minister would be good enough to get for me a copy of the speech made by the chairman of the unemployment insurance commission because I think it is a speech which would be very helpful I am sure, to all of us on all sides of the house.

**Mr. Starr:** I think the hon. member can get it from the unemployment insurance commission. If he wishes me to do it, I will get it for him.

**Mr. Chevrier:** I am asking the minister to get it for me because I must say I was unsuccessful in getting it.

Let me deal with this very program which the minister has explained by way of intervention. If the suggestions made by the chairman of the unemployment insurance commission were given consideration—the minister says they are—it would, I am sure, help tremendously. I ask the minister this question: Is it not a fact that the appropriation for this purpose was cut in the present estimates?

**Mr. Starr:** Not to my knowledge. I do not know what the hon. member is talking about, whether he is talking about vocational training or approved courses by the unemployment insurance commission. If he is talking about approved courses by the unemployment insurance commission, that is a somewhat different thing.

**Mr. Chevrier:** I had both in mind, but I was interested particularly in the vocational training program.

**Mr. Starr:** In that case, the program has been laid out and approved by the government and we have apportioned a sum of money to this program, which extends over a period of five years, amounting to \$40 million.

**Mr. Chevrier:** When the minister speaks I would appreciate—and I am sure those on this side of the house would very much appreciate—an examination of the proposals made by the chairman of the unemployment insurance commission in that respect because I think it is a suggestion which would be worthy of serious consideration.

**Mr. Starr:** I will send the hon. member the speech.

**The Chairman:** Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member for Laurier but his time has expired.

**Mr. MacInnis:** Mr. Chairman, in rising at this time it is quite evident that there may be repetition. However, I should like to place a few remarks on the record today.

[Mr. Starr.]

Once again the hon. member for Essex East is trying to set himself up as the champion of labour. Memories have been mentioned here and all I can say is that some memories are very short because when the hon. member for Essex East was a member of the labour relations committee last year he found it absolutely necessary to leave the committee in order to get a prepared list of questions drawn up by the Liberal research department. He was not familiar enough with the labour situation and labour conditions to go into that committee prepared to ad lib his questions and to recognize whether the answers were right or wrong.

Just a few days ago the hon. member for Essex East in answer to a direct question in the house said, as found on page 1021 of *Hansard*, the first column:

When I was a member of the government, of course my hon. friend knows that as a member of the cabinet I could not rise in my place and take issue with the government of the day.

That is the attitude and the approach of this gentleman who today wants to champion the cause of labour. Last year and again this year the official opposition moved to adjourn the business of the house to discuss the unemployment crisis. I should like to make reference to this matter and I cannot do better than to quote what the *Montreal Gazette* had to say last year on February 11:

In due course, the Monday when the opposition parties could name their own debating topic arrived. And what did they choose? Did they select the unemployment crisis, which had been of paramount importance only five days earlier, having deteriorated in some unexplained way by alarming particulars since January 30? Was any other choice possible? It was. The Liberals, after due consideration, launched a debate on federal-provincial relations.

The hon. member for Gloucester is also trying to set himself up, particularly in my riding, as the champion of the coal miner. Again this is repetition but I would one again remind the house that he is only a coal critic by circumstances. He has no personal interest whatsoever, no personal knowledge, and he has admitted that it was the first time he ever visited a coal mine in that area.

The figures have been mentioned here—and it is not my intention to go over them again today—but I would once again like to place on *Hansard* the record of the opposition from 1936 to 1940 when they were in power. In 1936 there was 12.8 per cent of the labour force unemployed; in 1937 the figure was 9.1; in 1938, 11.4; in 1939, 11.4, and in 1940, even after nine months of war, 9.2. I want to emphasize very strongly that