

Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand). The minister is one of those who knows the province of Quebec and is eager to help his fellow-citizens.

The legislation on designated and special areas supplies two most useful weapons to fight the scourge of unemployment.

In my region of Rimouski, the lower St. Lawrence River and Gaspesia, we benefit, as does all Canada, by the acts fostering updating and vocational training.

For instance, if we consider that for the year 1968-69 this retraining program has cost \$1,231,692 for the district of Rimouski alone and that a further amount of \$1,450,244 was paid on allowances incidental to this retraining; if we consider for the year 1969-70, the allowances paid to the 1,260 persons who took those courses amounted to \$1,509,000 and the federal government contribution to composite schools, we can say that the government has done its share to help alleviate the unemployment situation. As for the proposed measures, I feel that the granting of tax credits should be one of the first short term measures the government might take to encourage private enterprise and, but the same token, to create jobs.

The new measures designed to improve the Unemployment Insurance Act should be applied as soon as possible. Furthermore, in this fight against inflation, it would be advisable to gear those measures to particular areas, because we are all aware that in Canada some areas suffer from unemployment on account of their situation. Then, care should be taken so that the people of these regions do not have to suffer too much from the war we have to wage against inflation.

As far as Quebec is concerned, long-term social animation and education work should be done among our youth in order to encourage those who have chosen scientific or technical careers to create jobs instead of relying on the government, once they have completed their studies and earned a little money. Let them be self-reliant, depend on their own efforts. This would greatly improve the manpower situation in Quebec, particularly when we think that in the last few years, according to my information, 75 per cent of students majored in arts, literature and human sciences. It is necessary and very useful but 75 per cent is surely too high a percentage because those students will later be unemployed.

Finally, I think that the fight against unemployment must be considered very seriously by the government. On behalf of my fellow-citizens, I ask the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey) to take the necessary steps in the next few weeks to lessen the danger of economic deterioration this winter, that we might live with a certain amount of pleasure and have the satisfaction of working towards better living conditions for our fellow-citizens.

[English]

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, as I listened this afternoon to the glowing words

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of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) in describing the government's anti-inflationary policy of these last months, I was reminded irresistibly of the famous medical bulletin "The operation was a great success, but the patient died."

An hon. Member: That is an old one.

Mrs. MacInnis: Yes, it is an old one, and so is unemployment. The fact is that while the Canadian patient is far from being dead, he is in a very critical state at this time in respect of unemployment, and the government's policy has contributed immeasurably to that state. The fact also remains that the government's own research people tell us that during this coming winter 700,000 people will be looking for work in Canada and that three million Canadians will face loss of income due to unemployment.

The minister quoted various experts to buttress his rosy opinions, but neglected to give us this quotation from the latest report of the Economic Council:

We regard recent and current rates of unemployment as unacceptably high. Canada probably now has the highest rate of unemployment among the more industrialized, advanced nations, even after allowance for the differences for the basis of unemployment estimates.

He also neglected to give the opinion of the general public, the every day men and women, many of whom have experienced unemployment in a very direct way. A Gallup poll of November 7 asked this question:

On the whole would you say the government is doing a good job, or not a good job of handling unemployment?

The following was the Canadian picture. Sixteen per cent said that the government was doing a good job of handling unemployment, 19 per cent said it was doing a fair job and 57 per cent said it was doing a poor job of handling unemployment. The highest level of disappointment was in the province of Quebec, where 63 per cent said the government has been doing a poor job. Quebec was closely followed by the west, where 60 per cent said the government had been doing a poor job.

We have heard a great deal about Quebec this afternoon. I shall say only a few words about it. What a tremendous job the Premier of that province is facing now in finding jobs. He promised 100,000 new jobs by the end of 1971. The Economic Council says that the total number of jobs created for Quebec in 1970 is 3,000; so he will have to provide 97,000 jobs in the coming year. Meanwhile, without federal assistance and federal programming neither the province of Quebec nor any other province will be able to cope with the unemployment problems they will face in the months immediately ahead because we are dealing with an immediate and urgent situation.

I agree with the member from Newfoundland who said he had no interest in talking about seasonally adjusted figures, because what we are dealing with is not figures but men and women and their families and the fact that