

prevailing in the province of Quebec. The hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Stanfield) talked about the Maritimes and particularly about Quebec, and the motion refers to the regions hardest hit by unemployment, and I think nobody would blame me for reminding the House that the province of Quebec is much concerned about its unemployment rate.

Mr. Dupras: Give us examples!

Mr. La Salle: And the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Dupras) speaks about a bad government in Quebec as if the situation there were recent. Mr. Speaker, we already had problems two, three or four years ago. And the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Stanfield) pointed out the indisputable fact that under Liberal governments in Ottawa and Quebec there were already tremendous difficulties. The difficulties we are now experiencing could easily be anticipated. It was not for want of warnings. I think the hon. member for Halifax has given this government excellent advice for several years. He has been made the laughing stock, he has been called . . .

● (1740)

Mr. Béchard: And you dropped him.

Mr. La Salle: . . . a prophet of doom, and the government rejected his suggestions. The hon. member for Halifax had made his intentions clear following the 1974 elections. Besides, the government gave partial recognition to the value of his suggestion in adopting a very well known measure, but if it had been implemented 100 per cent, we would not have the problems the Anti-Inflation Board has had and still has. So this might be the problem now. Since the 15th of November, we have heard many comments of course. Reasonable people have told us of the difficult and delicate situation prevailing in Quebec. Quebecers have responded to repeated frustrations due to the action of the present government. Is it necessary to recall, Mr. Speaker, the representations and the recommendations which were made by the then Liberal ministers in Quebec. I remember very well men such as Mr. L'Allier, Mr. Saint-Pierre, Mr. Castonguay, Mr. Hardy and Mr. Choquette. I remember they made recommendations and demands concerning various responsibilities, particularly in the economic field, advocating additional expenditures. These men received a great many negative answers, and we were surprised to see on election night that Quebec had lost confidence. We are surprised, and there is the danger; we continue to ridicule the situation or to pretend that we are going to deny available services to this province through day-to-day provocation.

Mr. Dupras: This is not correct!

Mr. La Salle: I hear that this is not correct.

Mr. Dupras: Give examples.

Mr. La Salle: Examples? Well, we are concerned about the visit of Quebec minister Claude Morin to Paris. We are concerned about his visit. However, how many Quebecers have been in Paris? But we are concerned about this. Given the

Regional Unemployment

circumstances, Mr. Speaker, it is the government approach made up of confrontations which often lead to arrogance. We refused to establish a genuine dialogue with the provinces. We treated them as if they were opponents instead of allies.

Some hon. Members: Not true!

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Speaker, I am shocked to hear my hon. friends opposite say that it is not true. The federal government should stick to the following policy at the present time: we want to be respectful in order to be respected. I think we have a unique opportunity to do it now and given the climate and concerns which are being expressed in Quebec, the federal government has the immediate obligation to prove that restoration of economic progress is possible within the framework of the constitution but it ought not to adopt a negative attitude. We cannot turn our backs on the government of Quebec at the present time. We cannot be sulky with it, and in the interest of Quebecers, Mr. Speaker, time has come now to prove that it is not only possible to help Quebec but also all provinces.

Mr. Dupras: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. La Salle: The hon. member for Labelle who almost never takes the floor!

Mr. Dupras: Mr. Speaker, I would like the hon. member for Joliette to give material evidence on the way the federal government impedes or delays the economic progress of the province of Quebec. If he is fair and if he knows what he is talking about, he is going to give us concrete examples; otherwise he should refrain from talking.

An hon. Member: He has not got any.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. I think we are getting into the realm of debate. That is not a point of order.

[*Translation*]

Mr. La Salle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would invite my colleagues from Quebec to speak out. I am not talking about the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. He told the House what he intends to do and I think he means well, I simply say that the time has come to do something. I hear the hon. member for Labelle who makes me lose 30 seconds of my speech. Too many members from Quebec were absent, kept silent about the recommendations made by the province of Quebec well before November 15, Mr. Speaker. That representation of 60 members, taking Quebec for granted, preferred leaving their own government give as many negative answers to Mr. Bourassa's government, we remember that, not only today's government, but Mr. Bourassa's government.

Mr. Dupras: Give examples.

Mr. La Salle: And I say that with respect to communications, immigration, and so on, the Liberals were pitiful con-