

Unemployment Insurance Act

there will be no prejudice against any class of workers. If we adopt a clear policy, it will be much easier to give satisfaction to everybody concerned.

Before I take my seat may I be permitted to join with the preceding speakers who have extended their appreciation to the minister and to the officers of the commission, not only for their knowledge but for their patience with us. I wish to state here that it was a real pleasure to attend the meetings of that committee.

Mr. Barnett: Mr. Chairman, it was not my intention to take part in the discussion in committee at this stage but I think I should have a word or two to say in view of the fact that the hon. member for St. John's East made reference to some remarks of mine on the second reading. The hon. member raised this matter in the committee and I think I should inform members of the committee of the whole as to what I said at that time. I am reported on page 223 of the proceedings of the committee as having said:

I was the member who made that statement in the house, and I have had it drawn to my attention since that the statement was not entirely correct. I am prepared to accept that that is the case. I should have said, in my remarks in the house, as has already been indicated, that this situation exists in respect to those who were employed by the American government or some department or agency of it, and I think now that the matter has come up that this is a point on which it would be valuable to have some amplification in the committee as to what can be done, or what should be done, to take care of that aspect of the situation.

There then followed some extended discussion of the matter in the committee during the course of which reference was made to some negotiations which were going on with the United States authorities. I suggested in the committee, as I do now, that if such negotiations do not prove to be successful in the near future, and particularly in view of the statistics placed on the record by the hon. member for St. John's East, some special arrangements could very well be supported and approved by this parliament so that the establishment of such bases will not have resulted in workers being placed in a discriminatory position.

In the committee the Minister of Labour suggested that the negotiations should be permitted to proceed for a time before any such plan was considered, but he did indicate at that time that he hoped to be able to make a further statement. I mention this particularly in view of the fact that the minister has indicated he is going to be away. I suggest that if he is not in a position to make a further statement he be sure that the acting minister is aware of the situation and that

we be given some definite information before the end of the session as to how this problem is developing and how it is going to be handled.

Mr. Stick: Mr. Chairman, I do not want to take up the time of the committee unduly, but there is one matter I must speak on and that is unemployment insurance for fishermen. The brief submitted to the committee on industrial relations gives me cause for concern because it was the most negative statement I have ever read. A great deal of work had apparently been done to show reasons why fishermen should be included under unemployment insurance but there was not one recommendation as to how it could be done.

I do not want to enter into a discussion of the fishing industry, but it was set out in the brief that in 1949 there were some 88,000 fishermen, which number had been reduced to 54,000 by 1951. This morning the hon. member for Cape Breton South, for whom I have the greatest regard, stated that the recommendation is that 6,000 of those 54,000 could possibly be insured under the Unemployment Insurance Act. I would like to see all fishermen come under the act. I speak on behalf of all fishermen, not just the 6,000.

The statistics which I have quoted indicate that our fisherman population has shrunk from some 80,000 to 54,000. If we are to insure 6,000 and leave out 48,000, what will happen to our fishermen? Are they still going to carry on? Are they not going to become dissatisfied and give up fishing? I do not want to take a dog in the manger attitude, and if unemployment insurance is going to help 6,000 fishermen I am prepared to swing along with it, but not at the expense of the 48,000 other fishermen.

The association of fishermen in Newfoundland submitted a brief. I am not allowed to table this brief but I can comment upon it. Speaking for the majority of the fishermen in Newfoundland, they claim that there should be certification of fishermen who have actually fished for the required period for the granting of unemployment benefits. They suggest that the fishermen should contribute the required amount to the unemployment insurance fund. In other words, they do not want relief.

They suggest that agreement should be reached as to who is the employer of the fisherman and who shall pay the employer's share of the contribution. They submit that the federal government should be prepared to pay a proportionate share. They state that the time has come when the fishermen can no longer be treated differently from