

Supply

• (1530)

People used to laugh about make-work programs and say that they did not provide long-term jobs. But they did retrain people, they did show them that there were other jobs in the community that could be done and they did build certain things in the community. But the most important thing was that they allowed people to find the additional work weeks necessary to establish a claim at an unemployment office. As well, they gave income to the people in many communities who needed that income in order to remain there and be available for the seasonal work in those areas.

This minister has changed the direction of the unemployment insurance program. She has said, "We will retrain". She has not said the government will provide any work opportunities for the many people who will find themselves caught by the new changes in this act.

It hurts members opposite to hear this.

Mr. Reid: It hurts anybody to hear it.

Mrs. Campbell (South West Nova): They will have to hear it eventually. There are 139 groups that want to appear before the Senate. I have never seen a change in any government policy and the spin-off effects it will have in the many regions, villages and towns across Canada be less scrutinized.

It is a piece of legislation geared strictly, in my opinion, to the free trade agreement.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mrs. Campbell (South West Nova): They laugh. Our unemployment insurance system has at least provided a subsidized income to allow all Canadians to have a reasonable living. Until this government or a new government provides a new outlook on how we are going to have income maintenance across Canada, we need that program in various communities or people will, as a result of this legislation, have to leave their communities and their families and go into the downtown areas of Toronto, Mississauga and other places in Ontario.

They may have full employment in St. John's, Newfoundland, but there is not full employment in Halifax. Many people there are now beginning to suffer the economic consequences because not only is the fishery not bringing income into that area but the people in the

surrounding areas are not going into Halifax and spending money.

The whole direction which has been followed since I came back to the House of Commons less than a year ago has been detrimental to the regions. We see it in the fishery. We see it in the unemployment insurance changes. Because business has said the program must carry itself, the Unemployment Insurance Act must be directed toward business. Even de Grandpré and Forget said there must be something within the economy to sustain the people in the long term. Retraining should be left for business. Retraining should be done by the IBMs and the GMs, not subsidized by the government for the GMs and the IBMs.

Madam Speaker, the other day I picked up a press release and saw that the minister had given \$2 million out of the UI fund to a radio station, CBC, to provide a program for retraining senior Canadians aged 55 and up. Why does downtown Toronto need \$2 million? Is there no awareness within the business community of Toronto that the older worker has to have assistance, has to be reintroduced to the workforce by the community, by those businesses?

That \$2 million is coming from claimants in the east who will have reduced benefits and going to Toronto, the richest area in Canada. Business people are asking her to change the Unemployment Insurance Act and she cannot get them to submit, on a tax receipt, the assistance needed for CBC to carry that program.

That was okay. The worst part was that it was only for a designated area in Ontario, I think seven cities. It did not go across Canada to help other older workers getting back into the workforce. It only helped her area and those businesses in that area. This is a very limited area as far as I am concerned.

I have watched this government bring in a bill and impose closure on it after only one day of debate. If I recall correctly I did not speak on this bill at second reading. I think I spoke on the closure motion.

I do not think I have seen a study on what is going to replace the \$50 million in Nova Scotia, but I do know that with the way the unemployment changes are going that has to be studied. I do not think our municipalities can create the weeks of work needed in order for people to make claims without some assistance from the federal