

employer, and the hustle and bustle of trying to find that additional week when a person is going to be without money for the next two months are very hard.

There is also the harshness to the community because the municipality then has to bring in assistance to the families of those people who are not qualifying for unemployment insurance, and then the social assistance program comes in which we, as the federal government, cost-share 50 per cent under the Canada Assistance Plan. So one way or another we have to pay the cost of the individual not being able to qualify for unemployment insurance. These are some of the aspects which I feel under the variable entrance requirement should be looked at in committee in connection with this bill, by which we are extending the process for another 18 months.

I just want to quickly talk about the financial aspect. The government still plans to continue the full cost of regional extended benefits. What they are doing in this bill is allowing the private sector, through premium contributions, to pay for the initial regular and labour force extended phases of the program. In other words, those two areas will be self-financing. That is fine. That is very good. But the saving, we are told, effective July 1, 1980, in government expenditures will be reduced by some \$378 million for the balance of the current fiscal year. If you took a whole year from July to July it would come to practically \$500 million. I should like to say to you, Mr. Speaker, where is that half a billion dollars going? Is it going to create more jobs? Is it going to add some money so that true statistics may be obtained in certain areas? I have not been told. I should like to know where that saving is going. I should like to see it go into job creation and reduce the unemployment rate. Again, I am looking forward to the committee and a study of this bill to see just what those savings are going into.

I should like to comment on a couple of other areas in the minister's speech yesterday. He told us he would be establishing a task force which will study the unemployment insurance program over the next 18 months. I welcome that announcement. I worked quite diligently for four and a half years trying to get new ideas accepted with regard to the application of the Unemployment Insurance Act. I would hope there is to be some consultation with Parliament on the direction of that task force. The hon. gentleman has not said where the people would come from or who will be involved in the work of this task force. I hope it will not be just people within the department or within the commission who will be reviewing the principles and objectives of the program because, if that is the case, and if we look at what they have given us in the past, we shall not have very much left of the unemployment insurance program. The fact that this program was created to eliminate the difficulties people experience when they are unemployed across Canada must be the top concern of any task force. So my question to the minister and to the members of this task force or study group, whoever they are going to be is: what are you going to look at?

The minister outlined some guidelines but it seems to me those were not the only guidelines. It is the application of the

unemployment insurance program, it is how does it apply in South West Nova as it does in downtown Toronto—how do we look at who the recipient or the beneficiary will be, why does one area of Nova Scotia have a different qualifying period or a different variable entrance requirement from another when people are the same, they basically earn the same living from the same process—it is either farming or fishing or forestry in the southern end.

I look forward to the task force but I do not look forward to it if it is not a truly consultative group which will incorporate parliamentary concerns with the ideas before they bring forth any new legislation.

The last thing I should like to speak about, and I shall not be too long, is the change from the 20 hours of the part-time worker, or 30 per cent of maximum insurable earnings in order to qualify for a stamp. This has truly hurt the women in particular who make up the greater number of those in part-time employment. The minister mentioned yesterday that one in every four women is a part-time worker whereas the figure for men is one in every 17, if I am not mistaken. I am open to correction on that. In order to qualify for a stamp, last year the change was 20 hours a week minimum for employees on time worked or fixed salary basis, or 30 per cent of maximum insurable earnings for others. I am glad the minister is able, under the regulations, to change this, but had people on the Unemployment Insurance Commission listened to some of us members at the time of this change, it might not have to be changed again.

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● (2200)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Knowles: My friend and I wish to ask the same question. The question on both our minds is about tomorrow. There have been some discussions and the order of business has been altered. Can the government House leader tell us what it will be?

[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I acceded to the request made by opposition members who were not ready to proceed tomorrow with Bill C-5. Consequently, we will proceed with Bills C-35, C-22, C-13, S-6 in that order and then we will go on to consideration of items on the order paper in the order they are entered.