

Unemployment Insurance Act

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Shame on the member for Essex East.

Mr. Starr: In the other categories, from \$15.99 to \$19.99, and so on, he did increase the rates in the case of employers and employees; but in the case of people who earned the least, from \$5.40 to \$11.99 a week, he raised the rates 50 per cent and 30 per cent for the workers and would not raise the contributions of the employers.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Shame on the member for Essex East!

Mr. Starr: I cannot understand how the hon. member for Essex East can take on this mask of great interest in the working people after what he did to them in 1950; and, Mr. Chairman, that bill was rammed through the house. It is interesting to read *Hansard* of that time and see how the member for Essex East would not allow any straying away from the amendments under discussion but consistently interrupted, as he has interrupted during the whole debate in the industrial relations committee and in the house on these few simple amendments.

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Chairman, many remarks have been made about the workings of the industrial relations committee, and I do not intend to add to them today. However, I should like to deal for a moment with some of the observations made in the comedy act put on by the hon. member for Essex East. The hon. member professes to have a great interest in labour. He stands up, advocates his interest and pounds his desk. I may say that he does a poor job of pounding his desk. I would hate to see him appear before any labour group if he cannot do any better in pounding his desk.

Why does he not act like a labour man if he wants to represent labour? He claims to be a champion of labour, but he finds it necessary in labour committee meetings to run out for what he calls ammunition when he exhausts his list of prepared questions. Any man acting on behalf of labour would not come to a committee with a list of questions prepared for him by somebody else.

He has referred to a hidden tax being imposed upon the people who pay into the unemployment insurance fund. I am very glad to find out that the former administration had the same attitude, and that when they made provision for additional payments they were imposing a hidden tax. That was their attitude at that time. It must have been, because that is what they profess today.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): What about the benefits that were also given at the same time?

Mr. MacInnis: I think the hon. member for Essex East has been given sufficient time to explain his points of view without asking for my opinion on them. I do not think too much of them. All we have had so far is a filibustering of the bill with talk about the merits of bond conversion and the state of the fund. I think the committee is missing the whole point. The purpose of the bill is to benefit the unemployed people of the country, and I think that should be given the highest priority in the discussion.

The workers of this country, just the same as other categories of taxpayers, naturally have an aversion to accepting higher taxes or higher payments for anything, but from my own personal experience I am quite sure that the labouring people of the country are so united that they are happy to be in a position to help their fellow workers who are not fortunate enough to be employed. Not only do the miners and steelworkers in my constituency contribute to this fund, but each and every week there is some sort of pithead collection or collection at the office to help some unfortunate person who is out of work and not able to draw unemployment benefits or relief. These men are quite willing to throw in an additional half dollar or dollar every week to help those who find themselves in such circumstances.

Mr. Peters: What about the government increasing its contribution to the fund?

Mr. MacInnis: The hon. member for Timiskaming has something to say by way of interjection. I recall that yesterday he took serious objection to any interjections while he was making a few remarks. I would ask for the same courtesy from him. The hon. member for Timiskaming also said there was no need to rush the bill through. The hon. member for Timiskaming was replaced on the standing committee for some reason or other, and with all due respect to him may I point out that the necessity for having the bill passed by June 12 in order that those receiving unemployment insurance would benefit was clearly indicated to the committee.

The hon. member for Essex East has said that the legislation could have been brought forward much earlier. I think the member will also recall that it was clearly indicated in the committee by the members of the unemployment insurance commission that there was much work to be done in this regard, that they had been working on the legislation and rushing it as fast as they could, and that the bill was introduced as soon as possible. The fact that the bill was not passed by the house before June 12 for the benefit of those who are unemployed was due to the activities in the standing committee.