

*Unemployment Insurance*

unemployment and put this money back into the fund certainly would not be doing nothing, I suggest, to solve this particular problem.

The hon. member goes on:

We have heard a barrage of complaints about the unemployment insurance fund being depleted. I think this is a serious problem facing the country and the government has recognized that by indicating its intention to bring forward at this session of parliament amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act.

Here the hon. member is not denying that this is a fact; he is saying the government is going to do something about it. Then he blames the opposition in these words:

—they have failed completely to offer any suggestions except the one suggestion that they make on all problems that face Canada, that we should print some more money and pay it out of the federal treasury.

I have not heard that suggestion since the Social Credit party left this house. While it is true the hon. member may hear some of these suggestions from hon. members from Alberta in the backbench Conservative ranks, I have not heard it put forward as a solution for replenishing the insurance fund which has been depleted.

The hon. member goes on to say:

Perhaps if we make a few more printing presses and print money faster we will be able to solve all problems on the basis upon which they want to solve them.

I am not sure who he is talking about there, because I have not heard these suggestions. However, I would suggest he has heard them from some of the backbenchers who follow very closely the Social Credit philosophy. The hon. member goes on to say:

I am not suggesting more people should not be covered by the act and should benefit, but I hope I have enough responsibility to offer some suggestion as to how this can be brought about other than by printing more money.

I hope he has too. I want to read some of the suggestions he has made. One is:

The act should be renamed the unemployment compensation act.

I do not understand just what advantage that would have. Then the hon. member suggests:

Every person in the labour force who is employed under a contract of service should contribute to the fund regardless of income or occupation.

Here we have the solution of the Conservative party for solving the depletion of the unemployment insurance fund. They say, "Throw everybody into it. Let us no longer make it an insurance fund. Let us not have any risk involved in it at all. Let us throw everybody in, particularly those who could not be unemployed".

I suggest these people under a contract of service are the armed services, and certainly the civil service, because the hon. member

goes on to mention the civil service. These are people who are not normally unemployed at all. They say, "Throw everyone into the unemployment insurance fund". This was the suggestion made by many hon. members in the industrial relations committee when the act was before that committee on a previous occasion. They said, "Throw everybody into it. They cannot possibly benefit from it, but we will get from them all the contributions we can".

What did they say about the Liberal government when they built up a huge fund? They said, "This is not fair; it is not in keeping with the insurance principle. This is not the way to do it". Now, when we find we have much greater unemployment, unemployment that really is not of a casual nature and which is draining the fund, they say, "Let us throw in a lot of people who could not possibly qualify for the benefits of this fund. Let us collect from them; let us collect from people who cannot possibly get any benefits".

This seems to be the solution put forward by these hon. members, and what is more dishonest than asking people to pay into an insurance plan who could not possibly receive any benefit out of it. No wonder the hon. member is honest enough to say, before he suggests this, that the name of the act should be changed. He says, "We will not call it an insurance plan any longer; we will rename the act the unemployment compensation act".

That is exactly what it will be. These people who are employed will be compensating the government and helping it maintain those people who are unemployed. This is not my interpretation of what an unemployment insurance act should be. This is not the interpretation I take from similar acts in other countries, where they consider the unemployment insurance principle to be a very important one for alleviating temporary, seasonal and casual unemployment which is not a major catastrophe, in an economic sense, in terms of having a large segment of the population unemployed, not through seasonal lay-offs but because of an economic condition which does not provide work for those who seek work.

The hon. member goes on:

This has been extended to a complaint about the failure of the government to consider the reimbursement of the fund.

Why should not the government reimburse the fund? The situation is of the government's making, and I do not suggest it would be done only by a Conservative government. It would probably have been done by a Liberal government. It certainly would not be done by a C.C.F. government.