

*New Unemployment Insurance Program*

it has been in other matters. If it does know, the government is absolutely obligated to give us those estimates. The country must know what it is getting into.

It will be clear, I think, why I regard this program as a giant Trojan horse. It may very well be a pig-in-a-poke as well. I welcome the government's attempts to move positively in this area. However, I think we must insist on the most careful scrutiny and widest possible public discussion before we become committed. This discussion should take place only when all the facts are available.

One final note. The timing is rather interesting. Just before we might expect the next federal election the government promises goodies without pasting us all with the increased taxes that go with them. That is pretty blatant electioneering—and this far ahead, Mr. Speaker!

In conclusion, I am pleased to see the sizeable increase in benefits in relationship to weekly income. I am happy, too, that for the five million people covered there will be a fairly substantial reduction in weekly contributions. I am particularly pleased to see that the federal government will absorb the cost of the plan when the rate of national unemployment reaches 4 per cent. This feature should remind the Department of Finance that the high rate of unemployment which its fiscal and monetary policies have created will, as far as this plan is concerned, cost the federal government some substantial sums of money. Perhaps in the final analysis the minister and the government will reflect a little more on the implementation of fiscal and monetary policies of the sort that are causing large-scale unemployment in this country.

I also welcome the regional aspects of the plan which take into consideration the high rate of unemployment in less-favoured areas of the country. Likewise, I welcome the suggestion that this white paper be referred immediately to the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration where the proposals can be studied in greater detail. I wish the minister well in his continuous battle with the millionaires row in the cabinet. In view of the comments made by the Prime Minister of this country and his callous attitude toward labour, I can only refer to that old Ukrainian folk saying: "The sheep are in trouble where the wolf is the shepherd."

[Mr. Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys).]

**Mr. John L. Skoberg (Moose Jaw):** Mr. Speaker, I should like first of all, on behalf of this party, to congratulate the minister for supplying us with a copy of his statement. I, too, am pleased that he made a forthright statement in the House today indicating that the confidential nature of this white paper had been breached by somebody else, not by himself. I am sure that as far as the many thousands of Canadians now unemployed, and the many more who expect to be unemployed in the near future, are concerned, as long as this government continues its 18th century policy the proposed reforms will be welcome.

I am sure many people across the country will welcome some of the reforms included in his announcement today. I am sure also that legislation is needed to protect the unemployed. But I suggest that provision of jobs would better protect the workers of the country than provisions to assist those who become unemployed, and it is the creation of such employment that should be our goal in a modern society.

The manpower policy of the government is urgently in need of reform, and perhaps the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. MacEachen) will make a statement in the House about sweeping changes to be made in his policy in line with the proposals made by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey) today. I also hope that the Minister of Manpower and Immigration will give consideration to the fact that the statement made today recognizes the need of the people of Canada for a social policy. I hope, therefore, he will announce how his department is going to co-ordinate its efforts with those of the Department of Labour.

I further suggest that many of the responsibilities presently assumed by the Minister of Manpower should be transferred to the Minister of Labour so as to effect better co-ordination of effort in looking after those who are unemployed and who need retraining under the manpower retraining scheme. We fully realize that under the present circumstances unemployment insurance alone does not sufficiently meet the needs of the unemployed. They need retraining. There are too many areas in the manpower department—manpower mobility is an example—which should come under the Minister of Labour so that actions could be co-ordinated. We note that many of the proposals made are proposals in respect of which this party has been urging the government to take immediate action.