

*Unemployment Insurance Act*

Our party has simply taken the position that working people are entitled to decent maintenance, that there is not widespread, systematic abuse and cheating of the system. Our party has taken the position that the real problem in Canada—and you can cover it up, throw it away, try to reduce the participation rate, cosmeticize the unemployment figures—is the fact that we have an economy which historically has produced a great deal of unemployment and a great deal of seasonal work, with large areas in the country where unemployment is in the 15 per cent, 20 per cent, 25 per cent position.

May I call it one o'clock?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock.

At one o'clock the House took recess.

● (1402)

**AFTER RECESS**

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

**Mr. Rae:** Mr. Speaker, there are features of this bill which we object to in particular, and I would like to go through them in the time remaining. The first feature which we object to is that the minimum insurability has been increased. This means that 42,000 part-time people, according to the minister's own calculations, will be cut off the rolls at a saving to the department of \$60,000. This proposal affects women and youth more than anybody else, and we think that that is a mistake. In fact, the minister himself admitted it during his speech on second reading when he said that these features would affect women.

The second feature is clause 4. It is part of the guts of the bill and it increases the requirements for new entrants and repeaters up to 20 weeks. While the minister has allowed a trigger clause for areas of underdevelopment in Canada for repeaters, he has not allowed a similar clause for new entrants. This cannot be done by regulation. This feature is expected to save \$300 million, and the majority of that saving will come from the area of heaviest unemployment in the country, the area east of the Ottawa river.

The third feature which we object to is the fact that benefits right across Canada will be reduced by 10 per cent. The thing about restraint which is important to remember is that one man's restraint is another man's income cut, and that is a point which we should bear in mind, especially at this time of year. It is all very well for those of us who are making a fair chunk of money to talk about pulling in our belts, but it is another thing to talk about pulling in somebody else's belt when that person is making at the very most \$160 a week from unemployment insurance. I think that the 10 per cent cut is the most vicious feature of this bill, the one clause which will be the most unpopular and the undoing of this government.

[Mr. Rae.]

The Tory party has put forward their two-tier proposal as the answer to the situation. I look upon this two-tier proposal as shedding one tear for youth and women and another tear for Atlantic Canada.

**Mr. McGrath:** That is very good.

**Mr. Rae:** That is what it amounts to. I would contrast the approach of the Conservatives on this matter to the approach which the hon. members for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald), St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) and Egmont (Mr. MacDonald) took in the debate on the child tax credit, and I was present right through passage of that bill, as I have been here right through debate on this bill. It is two completely different songs, and I cannot believe that it is the same party. That group was saying that the concept of a family income was discriminatory. In fact, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands gave several speeches, and they are all on the record, with respect to the fact that if you have joint filing in the matter of a child tax credit, it is discriminatory against women. How is this bill any different? How can that party justify saying to women who, for income tax purposes, do not have dependants, but who do have dependants for family benefit reasons, that they should not get the same benefits as men?

I have written a little song about the Conservatives which goes like this:

Cutbacks, cutbacks we like best,  
But that won't wash in St. John's West,  
So you mothers and singles give two Christmas cheers,  
For the Clarks, Joe and Bill,  
And their mighty two tiers.  
Yes it's 50 bucks, 50 bucks, ringing in your ears,  
And even less as part-time nears,  
So you mothers and singles give two Christmas cheers,  
For the Clarks, Joe and Bill,  
And their mighty two tiers.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Rae:** The Liberals remind me of a game I used to play when I was a child, not too long ago.

**An hon. Member:** Yesterday.

**Mr. Rae:** Yes, it seems like just yesterday.

**Mr. Cullen:** How can you say that, sitting behind Stanley?

**Mr. Rae:** I feel like I have been here for years. It was a game called "Simon says". But the game which the Liberals are playing is called "Gallup says". When Gallup says stand on your head, the Liberals stand on their heads; when Gallup says take it out on the unemployed, because there is a popular feeling going around that there are abusers and cheaters, the Liberals follow Gallup. He who lives by Gallup dies by Gallup. There is nothing easier, and I think that the Canadian people can see right through it. In doing the thing which may be temporarily popular, because of misapprehension and the misconceptions there are about unemployment insurance, those