

Unemployment Insurance Act

of referees does not grant the authorization to appeal to the arbitrator. He feels that his case does not include any essential factor or any special circumstance which would warrant the authorization to appeal.

The case of a man unemployed for five or six months seems insignificant, but that is not the main point. It is not an unusual occurrence either, but that chap is waiting for his money. This does not count so much. All this because the man, a worker on the labour market, is totally unprotected, that is, outside the scope of arbitration boards or labour unions.

Since the implementation of the Unemployment Insurance Act, he has paid his contributions but has never withdrawn any benefits. It was the first time he has ever applied to the manpower centre. He always had a job and his last one required him to work thirteen hours a day. Therefore, due to his advanced age, being 57, he was forced to stop working. I think it is rather hard for a man of 57 to be working 13 hours a day. He told the official at the manpower centre that he was no longer able to work thirteen hours a day, but that he was willing to work eight hours a day, like everybody else.

Now, I claim a man has the right to be tired without being considered an outlaw. We have proof of that in the correspondence exchanged between the right hon. Prime Minister and the hon. minister of transport. That correspondence can be found on page 2472 of the *Hansard* for September 25, 1967. Allow me to quote a few excerpts because they are really amusing.

September 5, 1967

The Rt. Hon. L. B. Pearson, M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada,
Ottawa, Ontario.

Dear Mike:

Some time ago, I discussed my possible retirement from public life with you and you were good enough to assure me that if I wished to be president of the Canadian Transport Commission when the time came to set it up, you would recommend my appointment.

—after a good deal of reflection, I have come to the conclusion that, if you are still of the same mind, I would like to become president of the commission... While a demanding and responsible position, it would not involve the same pressures as there are upon a minister of the crown. Though my general health seems to be excellent, I have, as you know, found these pressures very great in the past three years.

—I feel that I should accept the opportunity for somewhat less strenuous public service offered by the presidency of the Canadian Transport Commission and, if you agree, ask you to accept my resignation as Minister of Transport as soon as it is convenient for you to have the commission established.

And it is signed by the Minister of Transport Mr. J. W. Pickersgill.

We know the results. It did not take long. All the minister, exhausted by a \$35,000 a year job, had to do was to send a simple letter to find himself a \$45,000 a year job. But, for the ordinary guy, who has worked all his life for a small salary, who has paid unemployment insurance for many a year, who has struggled along, and spared no effort for 45 years, I would consider that it means destitution. Because that builder said he was tired, he is considered an outlaw. On the simple decision of a civil servant at the manpower centre, he is treated like a mangy dog.

Now, that man will not go without food, will not die of hunger either, because we have many welfare laws in our country. He need only apply for help. He has the right to go to the manpower centre. We know unemployment insurance helps the man who is out of work, but only after an investigation. If a worker manages, in spite of a small salary, to save a few dollars during his years of work, the civil servants at the manpower centre first advises him to spend those savings and, then to come back again. There again, the simple decision of an employee of the manpower centre will force a fellow to spend the \$1,000 or \$2,000 he has managed to save during his 45 years of work before he becomes entitled to receiving a few cents from unemployment insurance.

I regret to say those things to the minister, the sponsor of the bill. He is not abreast of the situation, and it is too bad that the one actually responsible is not here today. In the case I mentioned, I am convinced he should not be forced to spend all his savings. It is a simple matter of honesty, justice and common sense.

If a minister is entitled to be tired and rest at \$45,000 a year, I suppose a worker should have the right to withdraw what he is entitled to and expects. He has earned unemployment insurance benefits by paying thousands of dollars in dues throughout his life, and if he found a job first thing tomorrow morning, the government would find a way of catching up with him, and every week he would have to pay his unemployment insurance dues. He has been classified as "no good" to enable him to receive benefits, but he is totally unqualified to pay his dues. Yet, he simply said that he did not want to work thirteen hours a day but just eight.