

*Unemployment Insurance Act*

seem to be concerned about this and do not do anything in an effort to enlighten these people. As a result they are completely lost. I believe that many of these administrators should realize that this is an insurance fund into which people pay and therefore it should not be treated as if it were some sort of a charitable fund.

I believe it was my colleague the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. Winch) who referred to people with partial physical disabilities and those who are receiving pensions and cannot receive unemployment insurance benefits. I have not had too much difficulty in respect of pensioners provided they stated they were available for employment any place and were in good physical condition. I do not have any argument in that regard but I do have an argument in respect of people who are partially physically disabled.

There are many people who are perhaps unable to dig ditches or do other types of heavy work but are able to engage in other types of employment. There are people over age 65 who, because of the type of employment they had previously, receive very little, if any, pension. I believe a second look should be taken at the situation in which they find themselves. If they are available for employment as watchmen, security guards, gatemen or something of that nature, even if such employment is not available they should be entitled to unemployment insurance benefits because many of them have paid into the fund ever since it came into existence.

When I rose to speak I indicated that I did not intend to say very much. I thought that perhaps some of the problems in which I have been involved were unique but after listening to what has been said I find that they are fairly general in nature. I certainly commend the minister for bringing in this amendment to the act which provides for increased benefits. I should also like to say to him, however, that like my colleague the hon. member for Skeena I believe it is high time the whole act was revamped because so far as I am concerned there are altogether too many holes in it.

[Translation]

**Mr. Charles-Eugène Dionne (Kamouraska):** Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss in failing to take part in this debate, because having been unemployed myself more than once, I am quite familiar with the administration of the Unemployment Insurance Act and with the problems which arise at times. I would also

be remiss in not calling the attention of the house to certain facts which, in my opinion, should be corrected.

First of all, I must say I am in favour of this bill designed to readjust benefit rates. But it must nevertheless be admitted that this piece of legislation contains certain restrictions, as evidenced by three things. It involves something "contradictory" "compulsory" and "contributory."

What I find strange and wish to stress at once is the contradiction apparent in the bill. An increasing number of people are in favour of full employment and believe this possible. They try therefore to improve the Unemployment Insurance Act. I must point out right away this obvious contradiction. They should be honest enough to admit that full employment is practically impossible in a period of rapid development, when working methods are changed by automation, with the result that a certain percentage of workers are always out of work. Railway workers know something about it, and it is unfortunate that the expected and vaguely promised adjustment of benefits has been delayed so long.

You will agree that I could also mention many other classes of workers.

● (4:20 p.m.)

However, let us rather try to be logical in the face of the existing situation, and let us consider how the workers suffering from unemployment could be helped.

Since the passing of the Unemployment Insurance Act, more than twenty-five years ago, a number of changes have been made. In the majority of cases, it was mostly a matter of trying to secure the protection of the fund and providing employment for a growing number of government employees.

In 1942, the government's contributions and the dues paid by employers and employees were about \$44 million and administration costs a little over \$2 million, while unemployed workers received \$27,752,000 in benefits.

And in 1962, twenty years later, the amount of contributions by government, employers and employees was a little over \$325 million, the benefits paid were over \$400 million with \$45 million in administration costs. This is now big business, and a lot of money changes hands.

The proposed amendments to Bill No. C-197 are socialistic in spirit: to extend coverage of the Unemployment Insurance Act to all