

Government Orders

have told a few back home in his constituency. Therefore I must ask him one or two questions.

He talks about what he perceives to be the negative impact of this for his constituency, indeed for Newfoundlanders, and yet I did not hear him mention, as I will in my own speech, how pleased we are that fishermen's benefits are not in anyway being impacted by this. Is he not in support of maintaining fishermen's benefits?

Second, he talked about access to the unemployment insurance scheme. If he looks at the proposal before Parliament he will note that there is no increase in the qualification period for the constituents of Bonavista—Trinity—Conception. Yet, at the same time there are benefits to those people because of the Canadian Jobs Strategy, the programs that will flow as a result of that, and the additional funding available for things like Community Futures, the Industrial Adjustment Services and so on.

I think my hon. friend has certainly done an excellent job in toeing the party line in opposing the progressive measures that have been brought forward by the government in trying to bring the unemployment insurance scheme into the 21st century. I wonder if he might not take this opportunity while there is still a moment to recant to his constituents and tell them what excellent stories he has told us .

Mr. Mifflin: Mr. Speaker, there are times I am sure that all members stand on their feet and they are not really sure of what they are going to say when they get up. This is one occasion that I am delighted to rise and respond to my friend, the hon. member for South Shore.

It is safe to say that as mariners we share a lot of interests. I found it very interesting that the hon. member said that I was toeing the party line. I have come here as a Liberal, as a member of the Official Opposition, but when I was on my feet this morning speaking about unemployment insurance I was not only speaking for the 8,000 people who took the time to tell me and this House that they are not very happy with the changes in unemployment insurance but for Canadians who are concerned about their future and about putting bread and butter on the table. Those are the same Canadians that this House should be concerned with. I can tell you

that this side of the House is very concerned for those Canadians and will continue to be so.

I also want to say to the hon. member that I happened to read *The Chronicle Herald* coming back from my riding. The same member who criticized me and asked me why I was toeing the party line and not looking at the great benefits of unemployment insurance has a problem with fisheries, as we all know, and I think he would agree with that. He was quoted in the paper yesterday as admonishing his own government because he wants to get Community Futures in his own riding to look out for some of the problems that have been created by the policies of this government. I am delighted to respond to those types of questions. I am delighted to say that at least I can talk and toe the party line and still represent Canadians without having to worry about where I am coming from.

I would also like to add that he mentioned the job development strategy.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On a point of order, the hon. member for South Shore.

Mr. McCreath: I know it was not my hon. friend's intention to mislead the House. He may not have been aware of the fact that on Thursday it was my great pleasure to announce that the Minister Employment and Immigration had indeed brought forward—

Some Hon. Members: That is not a point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It is debate. Questions and comments are now terminated. The hon. member for Nunatsiak on debate.

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Nunatsiak): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak on Bill C-21, an act to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act. The amendments to the act as contained in this bill will have negative consequences on northern workers. Last April, when the government announced its labour force development strategy and the proposed changes to the unemployment insurance program, I expressed my concerns over the effects these changes would have on northerners. These concerns remain and have in fact been reinforced.

Across the country the government is increasing the minimum period of work required to qualify for benefits and is reducing the maximum duration of those benefits. In the north the minimum number of weeks an individual must work in order to qualify for unemployment