

*Supply*

properties of the program as an automatic fiscal stabilizer?

Another source of uncertainty has to do with the application of the UI benefits savings to the government package of training assistance for UI recipients. During the course of the bill's passage through the Commons, we were told by government members and the minister that new consultations were taking place with business and labour to determine how these funds would be allocated. We have not heard the results of these consultations.

How will these training funds be spent? Where will they be spent? When will the savings the government will realize by denying benefits to the unemployed show up in training expenditures and in whose pockets will they land?

The government has been vague on all these questions. These are all questions which require understanding by Canadians before approval is given to the kind of major changes to UI contemplated in Bill C-21.

If the government is so confident in its legislation, if the government really believes that its UI reform can stand the test of scrutiny, will it not permit the Senate to give this bill the sober second thought it deserves? Will it not vote in favour of this very reasonable motion and introduce the simple bill that will prolong the VER? We will co-operate. The NDP will co-operate.

We can pass this bill with no debate. We can demonstrate in this Chamber a rare display of Yuletide solidarity with the unemployed of this country.

Maybe the government is not so confident. Maybe it is not sure that this package is so solid. Maybe that is why it has rammed it through this House. Maybe that is why it used closure at every stage. Maybe that is why it will not let the Senate look at it.

Maybe the government, despite the parliamentary secretary's rhetoric, is really intimidated by Mr. MacEachen and his colleagues in the Senate. Maybe it is scared that if the Senate takes a close look at this legislation, it will expose the flaws in Bill C-21 and in the hollow arguments of the members opposite.

Maybe the other place and Canadians will see that for the few unemployed who will benefit by the elimination of the repeater provision, there are thousands who will

be cut off completely by this legislation, that these thousands will get nothing from the government's training programs, that the Canadian economy will be that much more vulnerable to the vagaries of the next recession as a result of the passage of this bill.

Let us not play brinksmanship with the unemployed of this country. Let us permit the democratic process to run its course. I call upon the government to pass this motion and introduce forthwith the required bill which will prolong the VER for a few more weeks.

**Mr. MacDonald (Dartmouth):** Madam Speaker, I have a question for my hon. colleague, though I know that time for debate is running out. My hon. colleague went on at some length and at the end of his speech, he indicated that the real reason that the government opposite seems not prepared to introduce a simple motion in the House to extend the VER until the legislation comes back is simply because this government does not want the legislation to be examined properly as it should be constitutionally in the other place.

The members opposite who will very shortly be coming in to vote on this motion I think are a bit cowardly in not allowing a full legislative process to take place. Would that be something that the hon. member would agree with?

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** I regret to interrupt the hon. member. Unfortunately we will not have the time to hear the answer of the hon. member for Cape Breton Highlands—Canso.

*[Translation]*

It being 5.45 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the Business of Supply, pursuant to Standing Order 81(14).

Accordingly the question is on the motion of Mr. Allmand.

*[English]*

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.