

Mr. JOHNSTON: I think perhaps that would be a good idea, and my hon. friend can discuss it whenever he sees fit. I believe the consensus is that this act is an improvement over what was in existence previously. I have no strong objection to it, but I should like to point out that as time goes on our unemployment problem will get worse instead of better. With the present system of contributions, as the hon. member for Spadina (Mr. Croll) has pointed out, the difficulty will become greater. It seems to me the remarks of the hon. member for Lethbridge (Mr. Blackmore) would be found to have a great deal of merit if they were properly considered. He suggested that the government should be contributing more to this scheme, and that view was supported by the hon. member who preceded me. The fact is that when the employee has to contribute, his purchasing power is reduced. When the employer has to contribute, the purchasing power of the public is reduced because increased costs of production go into the price of goods; as a result the people can buy less goods; industry can produce less goods because they sell less, so there is a general increase in unemployment. Whether or not people like to accept it, I think that is a sound proposition, and I believe the government must recognize it as such or find their difficulties in administering this act continually increasing. So I should like to support the suggestion of the hon. member for Spadina that the government should seriously consider increasing its contribution; and I would go one step further. The government has issued state money, and I think the Bank of Canada should be used for this purpose. It would not entail any increased taxation if the Bank of Canada were used to provide at least a portion of this increased government contribution.

These things will interfere with the administration of the act as it stands; the minister will have difficulties under many sections. As I read the act I can see trouble ahead in the administration of the section which tries to define suitable employment. I noticed the minister's interpretation in *Hansard* and tried without success to find the same interpretation in the act. I shall discuss that point when we come to it in the bill, but it seemed to me that what is contained there was quite the opposite to what was stated by the minister. I think that is all I care to say at the moment.

Mr. W. G. CASE (Grey North): Mr. Speaker, I do not propose to attempt to discuss the bill. In common with most hon. members I have not had an opportunity to

look at it, because I have only just received a copy of it. I should like to make some references to what appear to be disabilities in connection with unemployment insurance. In doing so I am not in any sense critical of the measure itself; I think unemployment insurance is indeed commendable legislation. It will not however in my opinion be fully appreciated or fully operative until such time as we can combine health insurance with unemployment insurance.

I, too, hold the view that because of the higher cost of living there is much to be said for consideration being given to increasing the benefits to workers. I am not in any sense sympathizing with those who are unemployed and who refuse to accept good, healthy employment, and I am not too critical of the stand taken by the deputy minister because I know something of the hardships being experienced by farmers in my own riding who would be only too glad to have some good, robust fellows help them out at this time. It seems to me we must draw the line somewhere.

However I feel that no measure of governmental assistance should have as its objective a deterrent to work. When I suggest that benefits might be increased for the worker I am appreciating the fact that the benefits from unemployment insurance are limited. That is, there is a time limit on them. And while a worker may be unemployed, I do not feel that he will cease to look for employment because he knows that his time in that regard would be limited. There may of course be exceptions to the rule.

As I said, I am going to refer to some of the handicaps about which people complain. I have in mind those who are temporarily employed. I suppose it is difficult to have the act apply to all in a practical way, so that it can be administered without too great administrative costs. But, to give an example, I am thinking of a lady who is now married but who engages in temporary work by relieving cashiers at certain offices and by doing secretarial work for from two to four weeks each year. Certain deductions are made for unemployment insurance. Yet the fact remains that if she worked only two weeks in each year, it would be a matter of about fifty years before she would be eligible for benefits. It is felt, of course, that that is a hardship.

Another class I have in mind is that of farmers who left their farms, I suppose for some very good reasons—I hope that in the main they were patriotic reasons. They left those farms during the war to engage in industrial enterprise, and while so doing contributed to unemployment insurance. Now that the