

enable Canadians to reduce absenteeism through improved work safety.

Mr. Speaker, I repeat that all the amendments I have just mentioned concerning Part IV as well as others to Parts III and V are the result of long consultations with unions and businessmen. Their purpose is to promote even more the spirit of cooperation and the sense of responsibility among all parties concerned.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments to the Canada Labour Code have been the subject of several interventions in the House last week and we have heard quite a few comments about them both inside and outside the House. Many people are waiting and hoping that the amendments will be adopted. I think it is fair to say that the amendments we are proposing are not only desirable and necessary, but that they are also quite appropriate. We can only conclude that they have drawn wide support both inside and outside the House.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I have no hesitation in strongly urging Hon. Members to adopt them as quickly as possible so that they will become part of the Canada Labour Code.

● (1125)

[English]

Mr. Robert Wenman (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, it is with regret that in studying this Bill we have come to the conclusion that it does not adequately address the concerns of Canadians regarding health and safety, and that it fails to address the concerns of women in the workplace. As well, the Bill provides no hope for the unemployed youth of this country and fails to recognize the rapidly changing nature of the workplace, particularly with respect to technology. If it fails in these four basic objectives—health and safety, technology, women and youth—it is not much of a Bill. That is my opinion of the Bill. That is my assessment of the Bill in its broadest terms.

● (1130)

This Bill is not a blueprint for labour, for business, for productivity or for Canadians. It is unsuccessful and a disappointment for Canadian workers and Canadians as a whole. It does not project the kind of future for our workplace we must have to meet the basic aspirations of all Canadians. It seems to me that what we are discussing today is a labour amendment code, and "code" is a very significant word because, surely, it suggests a type of guideline, a statement of values which points in a direction towards those values. A code should lead and be a strong statement of principle and direction; it must arise from current conditions in the workplace today and point towards conditions as they ought to be. I suggest it does neither.

This Bill is brought before the House of Commons, before the people of Canada, at a time, Mr. Speaker, when labour, our working Canadians, are concerned. They are concerned about jobs, about the creation of new jobs, and that those new jobs will be secure. In other words, those who are on the

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unemployment rolls want some hope of a secure job, not a six-week, 11-week or 12-week make-work program. It is not the hope of the unemployed that they survive for six weeks or 12 weeks. Their hope is that they can find a secure job which projects towards long-term, permanent employment.

Is this Bill pointing in the direction of giving job security to Canadians? I do not believe so, and it is a disappointment that it is not. Canadians are reaching out for jobs now. They want some leadership from the Minister of Labour (Mr. Ouellet). Instead they will get a minor extension of social benefits, a wishy-washy definition of sexual harassment, and little else, Mr. Speaker.

Canadians want job creation and job security. To get that job security we have to be assured of stability in the workplace, minimal work stoppages and strikes. How do we do that? We do that when in fact labour feels it is being treated in a just and equitable manner and when management feels that labour is trying to increase productivity at a time when productivity is decreasing. These are the kinds of conditions which have to exist and we must have a code, a guideline, which encompasses major labour code amendments. We have 1.5 million unemployed Canadians today, according to statistics, but that really represents only those who are looking for work. It does not represent—as has been revealed in the House of Commons—those on welfare, those who have ceased to look for work, who have just given up—

Mr. Darling: It does not even represent part-time workers.

Mr. Wenman:—and those part-time workers. The Minister made the excuse that our youth are lazy. What a pathetic condemnation! Our young people are not lazy. In fact, the current generation have a new work ethic instilled into them. There may have been drop-outs in the 1960s and 1970s but our new generation has concern and conviction. They want jobs and are willing to work hard at those jobs. That is how the majority of our young people feel today.

By the Minister's own statistics there are 800,000 young people with no jobs and with no hope of finding one in our country today. Labour is very concerned about that problem. How do we create a labour code, a guide, which will give hope to those young people? There must be a guide and direction for the labour force which will exist in the next five years and ten years.

In his speech the Minister did not talk about that, Mr. Speaker. He failed to put forward a guideline toward hope and opportunity for our young people. That is not to say that the opportunity cannot be there; but you have to create through the Labour Code those conditions in order to increase the capacity to produce through a working and expanding labour force.

Right now the labour force is chasing after a declining amount of work. So instead of the hope that somehow we are going to have an expanding economy, a larger pie with more jobs, we have a labour climate whereby labour itself is saying that the pie is getting smaller, more people will have to work fewer hours, and we will have to recognize that fact. But that