

*Supply*

• (1600)

The reality is that the Senate has not done its job. It did not start the thing properly and senators have been fiddling around with it ever since. They cannot make up their minds as to which way to go. They suddenly realize that they have a real problem on their hands. The newspapers in eastern Canada are beginning to editorialize on the weakness in the Senate because of this bill. So members of that place called for help. This motion was put together to try and help the senators, to try and not take the blame for this. We have done our work; they have to do theirs. But they want to shift it back to the House of Commons and say: "Set your legislation aside. Pass this special variable entrance rate that we are suggesting". The motion goes on to state: "this House declares that the passage of this motion does not constitute a vote of no-confidence in the government". What a lot of nonsense! Get on with the bill and pass it. That is what the Senate should be doing.

Aside from the variable entry rates, what are they doing? They are holding this up. They are saying to older workers: "We don't care about you. We don't care about the plans the government has for older workers to allow them to collect benefits past age 65". With respect to the special benefits for women who are pregnant and ill, that special 30 weeks that they can now get, they are saying: "Forget about that. We don't care about that. We'll pass that when we get around to it".

The member for South West Nova was talking about some of the communities in Nova Scotia that are going to be hard hit. The increase in Community Futures is tied up in Bill C-21. The repeater provision is in Bill C-21. It refers to those who are unemployed, then get some work and go back in the same year to try to collect benefits the second time. Under Bill C-21 the repeater provisions are waived. Much of the training that could be done under Bill C-21 is going to be held up because the funds will not be available. I just cannot believe that the Senate is that poorly informed.

In all the years that I have been in Parliament I have always sort of protected the Senate. I have listened to a lot of criticism over the years from people who said that the Senate of Canada is a useless thing, get rid of it, dump it, close it down, you can save a lot of money, and this sort of thing. I have always defended it. I have said: "I think the Senate has a useful place in our system". I

still do. But when I see the games senators are playing with this sort of legislation—dirty little games are what they are playing—I am fast becoming a convert to the view that perhaps the best thing we could do is just to eliminate the Senate.

This is playing brinksmanship, a game they should not play. Most of those guys have not worked for so damn many years they do not know what work is all about. They are totally removed from the reality of the workplace today. They do not know what training is all about. They do not know what is required in the industrial world today. Every industrial group that we talked to across the country has said that our biggest problem is that we do not have enough trained workers to carry on our industrial operations. People come to us and say: "Can we not bring in more tool and die makers from South Africa and Europe"?

When the Berlin wall came down and the East Germans were flooding into West Germany, my phone was ringing off the hook. People were saying: "We can bring a lot of tool and die makers from East Germany because they are good craftsmen and we need them here in this country". We are saying: "Look, we can train a lot of these people ourselves".

If you talk to some of our small business people they will tell you that, first, they do not have the resources to train. Second, they do not have the personnel. They have orders to fill and they cannot afford to take someone off the floor to train them. They are looking to the government to train them. The government is looking for some assistance from them, and for quite a bit of assistance from large business to help us on the way.

Let me tell you, I see this as a cynical, back-handed way of dealing with legislation. If the Senate gets away with this, I want to tell you that there will be some really upset people across this country. In the Maritimes in particular the people will be very, very hard hit. It will rest right on the shoulders of Senator MacEachen and his cohorts in the Liberal-dominated Senate.

There are areas in western Canada and in the north that will be affected by this action of the Senate. I would suggest that they sit back and contemplate what they are doing, reflect on it and get down and pass this bill. They can give it a good look-over with experts and officials