

*Unemployment Insurance Act*

it from the government anyway? That is the wrong outlook and governments themselves have been largely responsible for people getting into that frame of mind.

I suggest to the minister that his public relations in connection with unemployment insurance leaves much to be desired. Persons contributing under the act do not realize that the act provides only for unemployment, that it is not designed to pay benefits when a person has reached the age when he is no longer able to carry on or is retired. I do not know what the unemployment insurance commission would do in that case. It is possible that they may pay some benefits, I do not know, but those who contribute should know exactly what they are entitled to because of their contribution. I do not believe the department has made that clear, and consequently there is a great deal of misunderstanding.

Perhaps it is too late, but I hope the minister and the government will take into consideration the broadening of this act. What is really required is a comprehensive social security program that will take care of the individual through all the hazards of his industrial life.

Mr. JOHN R. MacNICOL (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, the minister did not mention it, but he knows that we passed an unemployment insurance act in this house, I think in 1935. It was during the administration of the late Viscount Bennett. At that time the minister sat in this corner to my left. He may remember my going to England to inquire into the matter, after which I delivered a speech in the house in support of the principle of unemployment insurance.

I compliment the minister upon bringing in amendments to the act. It was well understood that amendments would be required as the years went by. As he said, the British act has been amended many times and this act may have to be amended again. I rose merely to state that the 1935 act was not put into operation because of the controversy in the country at that time as to dominion and provincial jurisdiction.

I have only one word to say in addition to what I said a few moments ago. If the act does not call for it I hope that provision will be made for the education of the personnel of the unemployment insurance offices throughout Canada, so that they may deal more intelligently with the unemployed who come before them to register when they are unemployed.

It may be through the instigation of the management, but I know that in the offices in Toronto members of the personnel have

[Mr. MacInnis.]

been sent to various plants so that they can observe what goes on in the plants and what is done by the various work people. They become better equipped to deal with unemployment in that line when it comes into the office. I realize that the number sent out may not be very large, but I heartily support any program which leads to the education of the office personnel so that they may become better qualified to deal with unemployment problems, in the many trades.

I know of one young woman in the women's branch in Toronto who has visited many plants where women are employed in order to acquaint herself with what women are doing. She told me that this has been of great benefit to her when dealing with unemployed people coming into the office. She knew what qualifications are required for different jobs and she was able to send applicants to jobs. I hope that the minister will give instructions to his managers or superintendents in Toronto and elsewhere so that this field of endeavour may be expanded.

When a young woman—and this would apply to men as well—comes into an unemployment insurance office and registers as being unemployed, if the person she talks to is familiar with jobs for girls generally she may find on her files a position that is open which would suit the applicant, even though it is not exactly the same type of work she has been doing. I may not have made myself quite clear, but if the act does not call for something like that I hope arrangements will be made to have it included.

I will support anything that will lead to the better operation of the Unemployment Insurance Act. The success of the act depends largely upon the intelligence of those employed in the different offices. This is one line of endeavour which, I think, would result in a greater success of the act.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

### After Recess

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. CLARENCE GILLIS (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, I was a little in doubt about rising at this time because I was not sure whether you had put the motion before recess. I am heartily in favour of the resolution if it means what it says, the extension of the act and its clarification.

I wish to make just a few observations for the minister's benefit before he brings in the bill, and that is why I make them at this time.