

*Unemployment Insurance Act*

Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan), who, when he heard about the most recent election result in Nova Scotia, the collapse of the Liberal regime, said: "What does it matter; it is only another municipality down there".

[*Translation*]

And I must add that I am really surprised by what the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Lessard) had to say—

[*English*]

**Mr. Whelan:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) would not want to mislead the House. I said I considered it as another municipal election. He has in his caucus now the mayor of the city of Toronto. I am sure he would not want to downgrade him as just another municipal official. As one who has spent many years in municipal politics, I have the highest respect for municipal elections.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Clark:** I am not only delighted to have the minister confirm what he said but also delighted to hear him draw attention to the fact that the former mayor of Toronto was one of the five new Conservative members of parliament who won seats from former colleagues of his in the Liberal cabinet.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Clark:** I was also delighted to have heard the interjection from his colleague behind, the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Cullen), who referred to me as the temporary Leader of the Opposition. That is right, I am.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Clark:** Mr. Speaker, this is a real surprise for me that we should have here the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Lessard), a minister coming from eastern Quebec, a minister coming from an area with a really excessive rate of unemployment, who is prepared because I believe he did not speak in this debate—his colleagues in the corner did; they spoke against the bill—but he might be prepared to accept the bill that might force on the unemployed in eastern Quebec and underprivileged areas a greater prejudice, another impediment that might cause them problems in their development as a people and as an area.

[*English*]

It is a real surprise to me that a minister responsible for economic expansion would allow this government to impose these kinds of obstacles upon the development of underdeveloped regions in this country, particularly when they have before them the opportunity to adopt an amendment which would do away with the kinds of problems they are imposing on Atlantic Canada, on the east of Quebec and on lower income Canadians right across the country.

[Mr. Clark.]

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Lessard) on a point of order.

**Mr. Lessard:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to answer the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) that indeed I support this bill because I believe it is an excellent way of helping, by using those funds for other purposes, to create permanent jobs.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. The hon. minister will be able to make his contribution later on if he wishes to but at this time the Leader of Opposition has the floor.

**Mr. Clark:** Mr. Speaker, the minister probably anticipated something I want to say later on about the yet unspecified costs to Canada of this bill introduced by the government.

[*English*]

Because I am sure that one of the uncalculated costs to the people of Canada is that there will be a need for this government to pour more money into regions which have been treated by this bill. When we look at the over-all cost of this bill, when we try to calculate the effective restraint in this legislation, it will be important for us to look at the new expenditures of departments other than that of the minister who is proposing this bill which will be necessary to deal with the problems that have been caused by this bill. I am pleased to see the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Lessard) nodding his head in agreement with my proposition that there will be extra new expenditure, expenditure not in the budget and not anticipated before the bill was brought in, to take account of the very serious problems of poverty which will be caused and aggravated by this piece of legislation.

● (1552)

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Clark:** The two-tier proposal we have put forward is a much better way of approaching the problem we face for a number of reasons. First, there will be a direct saving which is significantly more than the aggregate saving of the measures being forced down the throat of parliament by the government. Second, the proposal put forward by the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra will not create the number of problems which will have to be dealt with later, the problems that the government is ensuring will occur by the nature of its legislation. Those problems will turn out to be very expensive to the country, expensive not only in terms of the obstacles to hope and development which will be put in the path of individual Canadians, but also expensive in terms of new programs. Perhaps there will be additions to winter works, LIP and a number of programs which will come forward to deal with the problems the government is creating deliberately today in the House of Commons.

Our proposal has the advantage of being acceptable to all of the provinces and, I would judge, the municipalities of this country. The mere fact that a matter is acceptable to the provinces is cause enough for the government to oppose it.