

*Unemployment Insurance Act*

industry, men and women are hired. That is what creates employment. If we can have hundreds or thousands of small shops across this country employing one or two people, it would cut down the unemployment rate drastically and add to the buoyancy of the economy. But we do not encourage this.

Today it is difficult to go into business. There are obstacles from every level of government and people become discouraged; they do not want to go into business or invest in business. They say: "If they do not want my business, I will go elsewhere." I was stopped by a man in the streets of Calgary in 1978 who said, "I am completely disgusted with this country." "How come?", I asked. He said, "I have tried to invest money in three provinces. All I have run up against is obstacles, difficulties and frustrations. So I went to the United States where I have invested \$100,000. I have \$200,000 more that I wish to invest, but I will not invest a cent in this country until things change."

What was one of the beefs he had? Capital gains tax was one. It is killing initiative, stopping the expansion of businesses and ruining the retirement plans of people who have spent their lifetime building industries, farms or businesses in this country. Today the government still wants in taxes half of every cent you make, when you are expanding or selling your business. How many hundreds of people are unemployed today because of the capital gains tax?

Look at the amount of money which comes in from the capital gains tax and the money which is being spent to look after the unemployed. I have no hesitation at all in saying that the government would be smart and clever to eliminate the capital gains tax. If the owner of a lumber yard wants to expand his business, or if someone wants to build a heritage for his sons and daughters or put away money for his retirement, he would have the incentive to do so. Today there is no such incentive and many people who wanted to retire at the age of 65 or 70 do not retire because of this capital gains tax. When they do not retire, they keep their business as small as possible, just large enough to make a living, whereas if they could sell it to a younger man or to someone who wants to advance, more people would be employed and there would be more production. Sometimes we forget that if this country is to develop economically, we must increase our production. It is from production that all good things come. Unless we increase our production in this country we will not have as good a life as we could have.

The unemployed also deserve a good life; they are entitled to it. It is important to get people working again. Let us provide work and jobs for those who want to work by removing the impediments which today prevent businesses from expanding. If we removed some of these obstacles, such as high interest rates, this will have a tremendously beneficial effect on our economy. Look at the effect high interest rates have on the housing industry. High interest rates prevent people from building houses and they eliminate jobs.

● (1620)

For the last several days I have wanted to ask a question of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Gray) but I have not been fortunate enough to be recognized. I wanted to know how much interest was being charged on the line of credit of \$25 million which we gave to Mexico a few weeks ago. That information was passed on to us in a press release, but it did not indicate anything about the interest rate. My assistant phoned the department to find out what interest rate was being charged, and someone in the department said that that was confidential information and could not be given out.

Why not? It is the people's money we are lending and the people will be responsible for the line of credit. Since when have members of Parliament been denied information concerning interest rates? Is it because the interest rate is similar to that which was announced the other day by a member and carried in some of the papers? Is it a zero per cent interest rate or a 3 per cent interest rate, while the people of the country have to pay 12 per cent or more? If we can cut interest rates for other countries, surely we can cut them so that people in this country can have homes and the unemployed can go to work.

I am not asking the hon. minister to tell me that it cannot be done; I am asking him to find ways of doing it. That should be the positive approach of any government in this day and age. It is not to say that we cannot do it or it has never been done, but it is to say that we will find some way of doing it. I am satisfied there are ways if there is a determined effort. I wonder how many hon. members of this House have ever been unemployed for any length of time. Fortunately I have not, but I came from a home in which I was one of ten. My father had a hard time feeding all of us. It was hard enough when he was working, but when he was unemployed for several weeks or months I saw the aging effect it had on my mother. She was worried we could not pay our grocery bill. We did not know where money was coming from. In a way I am thankful I had to go through that, because today I have feelings for those men who are unemployed, their wives and their children. They do not know from where the next meal is coming.

**An hon. Member:** They will have to eat baloney.

**Mr. Taylor:** I hear an hon. member saying that they will have to eat baloney. I should like to tell him that today many of our unemployed cannot even afford baloney; baloney is not cheap any more.

**An hon. Member:** Except around here.

**Mr. Taylor:** Except possibly in the House of Commons where at times we get quite a bit of it, but one cannot eat that. Perhaps it would be good if some members of the House of Commons were unemployed for a while and felt the pangs of hunger. Maybe they would have more heart for those who are unemployed today and double their efforts to provide them with jobs, because most of them want to work.