

*Labour*

major, as I say, in some communities. It is certainly major in some families.

There was one forest company that was in the habit in the last 10 years of phoning me every two years or so and inviting me to have lunch with some of the directors of the company. After this happened two or three times, I knew that that it was bad news. They wanted to invite me to lunch so they could tell me how many men were going to be laid off in this particular community. I would hear it from them first, and would then be ready for the repercussions from the community and from the workers. I never once received a luncheon engagement invitation when they were providing more employment. It was always to inform me of people being laid off. It was a regular pattern, and over the last 10 years in particular.

My concern with this legislation is that it does not help people when a plant is closing down totally. Perhaps it will help when it is closing down in part, when it is a relatively large plant that is important to the people, important to the community. That is where this legislation falls down. What we need, as others have pointed out before me, is a broader and more universal approach to the needs of older workers. Some of these companies have a very good community spirit. They are trying to do what they can under this situation. They try to provide alternative employment or get the workers to move to other areas. But it is much easier for a younger worker to move to a new community knowing that he has a certain number of years to work in that occupation than it is for an older person. Older people are invited to take early retirement, and sometimes attractive packages can be made available to them which they accept. But it is the workers caught between, the ones not quite old enough for early retirement, yet too old to be as flexible in their movement as are the younger ones, that need assistance.

It is not enough to talk of retraining for them. What are they going to be retrained for in those communities? We cannot really have everybody leaving Vancouver Island looking for work and coming to the Toronto area in Ontario. There has been a lot of that. A lot of trades people, a lot of workers of all kinds have left Vancouver Island over the last 10 years to come to Ontario where things are booming. But that is not an alternative for older workers. Retraining for jobs that do not exist is not terribly appealing either. There has to be a more comprehensive approach, a way of finding alternative job

opportunities that do not now exist in those communities but could exist with proper planning. Therefore we do need the broader more universal approach.

We need the earnings benefit based formula that was available under the Labour Adjustment Benefits Program. It paid two-thirds of the individual's earnings, which is not enough. Certainly when they were getting full earnings, they were not getting any more than they were spending. But to cut them back and to say it is less than two-thirds is just not good enough. We need legislative guarantees of provincial and employer participation. I told you of an example where an employer was prepared to participate, but it depended upon the goodwill of that employer. That is something that you can count on perhaps when times are good, when the employer is doing very well. But if the employer is not doing very well, they are not so anxious to voluntarily participate in this kind of program.

We need the establishment of a job protection board to evaluate lay-offs, share adequate notice and ensure that the terms of POWA are negotiated before the lay-off takes effect.

In general there is warning and time to prepare, but we need protection to make sure that this happens. We cannot always depend upon the good grace of the employer.

We need a levy grant system to ensure that the employers contribute to training. There are employers who do that and some that do not. But we want legislative protection for these older workers who have contributed the best part of their working lives and are not yet old enough for early retirement, if that is available, and yet too old to uproot and move to new communities and new job opportunities.

We support the legislation but we argue that it does not go far enough to look after today's problems for the older workers, certainly not in my riding.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** On a point of order, the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister.

**Mr. Cooper:** Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the three Parties. I understand that the Official Opposition, the Liberal Party, probably has one more speaker that they would wish to have on this legislation, and I understand that the NDP would have either two or