

and to have the Senate take remedial action where it is possible. I am not convinced that it is impossible to make changes to the bill that will improve it—not convinced at all. Other Canadians are not convinced either.

I was impressed with the statement issued by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops on December 12. The following statement was issued by Bishop Valois, the chairman of the Episcopal Commission for Social Affairs:

The withdrawal of Federal Government financing from the U.I. program, coupled with the new entrance restrictions, penalty clauses and related measures, will have a serious impact on the dignity and lives of hundreds of thousands of working people and their families.

Well, is anybody on the other side interested in finding out and examining whether that statement is true or not?

Senator Guay: No!

Senator MacEachen: Are they not interested in finding out whether the passage of Bill C-21 will have a serious impact on the dignity and lives of hundreds of thousands of working people and their families? We are asked in this resolution to dispose of Bill C-21 without finding out. The statement goes on to say:

In view of the fact that many groups and individuals were denied an opportunity to appear before the House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-21, and because of the central role of the Unemployment Insurance Program in our system of social programs, we therefore ask that the Senate exercise its responsibilities for "sober second thought" by conducting public hearings across the country. Particular efforts should be made to hear from the people most directly affected by these cuts and to propose amendments aimed at overcoming the negative impacts of the legislation.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator MacEachen: Now, this proposal dismisses that request. It would dismiss the request from the Canadian Labour Congress, which, through its president, has asked the Canadian Senate to discharge its responsibilities, to act as a chamber of second thought, and to undertake its own assessment of the impact of the changes in the Unemployment Insurance Bill. It may be undesirable at this hour of the day, honourable senators, to go into great detail about the impact, but it is not at all clear what the impact of this bill is on the poor, the unemployed, and the working families of Canada. It is not at all clear.

I laid on the record yesterday the differing analyses of the province of Newfoundland and the Commission of Employment and Immigration in Canada. There is a serious discrepancy between the analysis of the impact of the Government of Newfoundland and the Government of Canada.

In the interests of brevity, I will deal with only one aspect of the argument, and that is the area of impact. What is the impact? The federal government, in its document, "Success in the Works", presents some estimates of the impact of these new measures based on a detailed simulation of the operation

[Senator MacEachen.]

of the unemployment insurance program that takes into account numerous factors; these estimates are presented in many tables.

For example, in Table 13 on page 25, it is revealed that the age group hardest hit by Bill C-21 is the 25- to 34-year old age group.

Senator Guay: Shame!

Senator MacEachen: They will be absorbing a \$450 million reduction in benefits, or 37.5 per cent of the reduction pie.

Senator Perrault: Happy Christmas, unemployed!

Senator MacEachen: Table 15 at page 27 shows that 530,000 unemployed Canadians will be affected by a combination of benefit reductions and increased eligibility requirements. They will be affected by these two measures to the amount of \$800 million.

Senator Guay: Oh, my God!

Senator MacEachen: Now, the government calls this a saving to the treasury, but it clearly is a loss of income to the 530,000 Canadians.

The Hon. the Speaker: Excuse me, honourable senators, according to rule 12, it says:

If, at 6 o'clock in the afternoon, the business be not concluded, the Speaker or the chairman of the committee leaves the chair until 8 o'clock.

And so on, unless you wish to ignore the clock.

Some Hon. Senators: Ignore the clock.

The Hon. the Speaker: Please continue, Senator MacEachen.

Senator MacEachen: Honourable senators, the firm, Global Economics, was commissioned by the Liberal Party and the Canadian Labour Congress to examine the proposed changes.

Now, the conclusions of that study differ significantly from the government's study. Whereas the government predicts that the gross decrease in unemployment insurance benefits will amount to \$1.2 billion in 1990, this study forecasts a drop of \$1.52 billion. The study also found that the combination of measures to make more stringent entrance requirements and the reduction of benefits will affect 775,000 Canadians, in comparison with the government's estimate of 530,000. I do not know what the answer is, but, surely, we ought to know whether it is 775,000 or 530,000 before we pass this bill. Should we not know that?

Senator Cools: Absolutely!

Some Hon. Senators: Yes.

Senator MacEachen: The average loss to all these Canadians is about \$1,486, and the most pronounced loss is to individuals in Newfoundland, each of whom will lose about \$2,500.

Some Hon. Senators: Shame, shame!

Senator MacEachen: Individuals in Prince Edward Island will lose \$2,300.