

This recommendation is found on page 159 and reads:

We recommend, therefore, that eligibility for extended benefits be limited to persons covered by the unemployment insurance plan exclusive of persons over the age of 70 who are in receipt of pensions under the Old Age Security Act—

I point out again that the age of 70 is no longer valid because of the decline in the pensionable age that has been legislated since the tabling of the Gill commission report. The wording of my resolution, therefore, refers to normal retirement age which I really intended to tie in with the declining age eligibility for the pension. I feel that many revisions are necessary but I should like to commend to the government serious consideration of my motion.

**Mr. Keith Hymmen (Waterloo North):** Mr. Speaker, in addressing my remarks to the notice of motion introduced by the hon. member for Portage-Neepawa (Mr. Enns), I should like to suggest that the question before the house may be expressed succinctly as whether or not people of retirement age who seek other employment should be exempted from the provisions of unemployment insurance. In this connection, I believe we should particularly refer to section 27 of that act which lists those in excepted modes of employment. I am sure that whether or not hon. members are for or against this motion they all have a great deal of sympathy for the group referred to, those of retirement age who are becoming part of a special segment of our society, the senior citizens. At one time there was the belief that a person who retired should be, so to speak, put on the shelf and forgotten. This is not the situation today.

Many hon. members in this house have met some of our centenarians during this centennial year. I had the privilege of meeting four such people. We are all aware of a certain member of the other place who at the age of 90 has contributed a tremendous amount of work and effort to an important piece of legislation which we expect in this place in the near future. Today, 65 is considered the normal retirement age when a person can look forward to some rest, relaxation and an opportunity to do some of the things which he never seemed to find time to do.

However, there are situations when, because of circumstances or temperament, a person finds it necessary to seek employment in his declining years. To cut him off from possible benefits from unemployment insurance by voiding his participation in this

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program would, I feel, be discriminatory against those who need the income protection in the event of loss of employment through no fault of their own. I have one person particularly in mind in my constituency to whom I have been talking recently. I know there are many more. At the same time, any change may be discriminatory against other employees in the same line of endeavour who may not yet have reached retirement age.

The introduction of this notice of motion, Mr. Speaker, of course gives hon. members an opportunity to discuss the Unemployment Insurance Act, its past, present and future provisions, and the exceptions to this program previously mentioned as being covered in section 27. This whole matter must be, and I am sure will be, considered with a great deal of interest prior to and when the amending legislation is introduced. The present Unemployment Insurance Act, as hon. members well know, was introduced in 1940. The plan adopted was an insurance plan to provide compensation to the individual against loss suffered through temporary inability to obtain employment and was not meant to be a plan of unemployment assistance or a form of social welfare.

Important service has been rendered by this act over the years. The sum of \$5.5 billion has been paid out in total benefits. In this quarter of the century amendments have been introduced and changes have been made to the regulations. However, no major change has been effected since 1959. The contributions paid by employers and employees have increased somewhat and certain classes of employees have been excepted. Coverage has been extended to others. The maximum weekly benefits in 1941 ranged from \$12.40 per week to \$14.40. Since 1955 maximum benefits have ranged from \$27 to \$36 per week. We all realize that wages and salaries today are considerably higher than they were in 1955. Then, too, there is the serious matter of the cost of living about which we heard so much earlier today. Many questions have been asked and a great deal of concern has been registered from time to time in this connection since I have been here. Of course, I understand that this matter has been considered by a standing committee. The wage ceiling for insured employment has been increased about \$2,000 for those employed other than on an hourly, daily, piece, mileage or other rate per unit of work to the present amount of \$5,460 per year.

I have already mentioned the importance of the Unemployment Insurance Act. I do not