

Labour Adjustment Benefits

● (2100)

Most of the modern textiles are made from petroleum products. Canada is a nation which has many of these resources available. We are a nation that can develop those resources cheaper than any other nation. However, due to the trade policies of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, textile workers are being thrown out of work. It is not because we are inefficient or because we do not have the raw materials but because there is not the will on part of the government to develop. The government's desire, apparently, is to pay 60 per cent of the insurable earnings to some people who the minister decides through his appointee on some board are redundant. The people are redundant.

Our country is a great producer of raw material in the world. We are becoming a great exporter of more raw materials. We are becoming the leading hewers of wood and drawers of water in the world, instead of utilizing the raw materials and the competent people with which we are endowed to enlarge our industrial base. This minister introduces a bill to make those people redundant and to pay them 60 per cent of their insurable earnings for the balance of their natural days, or at least until they receive their old age security or guaranteed income supplement. That is what this program is all about. Instead of building this country, the government wants to put it on pension and lay it off. This bill is designed to give the country permanent UIC benefits, instead of creating job opportunities for people who are capable or working. This bill is intent on putting people on the dole and under the hand of the minister.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, where is the trade policy and industrial policy of this government? Where is the policy that ensures that people who produce footwear efficiently can obtain jobs in that industry? We still wear shoes in this country. Where is the policy of the government to provide jobs for people who are experienced in making textiles? We still wear clothes in this country. We can make the yarns and synthetics to make these clothes.

Where is the will in this country to use Canada's home markets as a base on which we can exploit world potential? What we get is a policy that pays 60 per cent of insurable earnings when you are out of work and redundant.

The government is going for the high tech industry, such as the famous computer company on which it wasted \$128 million. Sure, we need more high technology. Hon. members opposite need high technology, Mr. Speaker. The people of Canada have had enough, and the people who work for Admiral have had enough of this government. Admiral used to make the best appliances and televisions until this government, under the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, allowed the television market to be swamped by Taiwan, Korea and Hong Kong. It is not because of high technology or good merchandising but because the government wanted to give away the jobs so it could sell a bunch of unrefined and unmilled wheat. It gave away our internal market for technology, and that is what the government is doing to the telephone industry today. That is what it is doing to the

communications industry today, and it is what they have done to the microwave industry. Now it is the refrigerators, stoves, washing machines and dryers. Instead of allowing Canadians to develop their own products which can be sold worldwide, it is making sure our home market is destroyed by overseas competition. At the same time, it does not ensure that Canada has access to overseas markets.

If a company tries to sell its goods in Japan, it meets one non-tariff barrier after another. It makes one sick. However, the Japanese are allowed to come to Canada to form their sales corporations and sell their products, and the government does not bother them one bit. What the government does is to sell them our coal, iron and wheat. We do not even sell them our pork half the time. The government allows nations to buy our raw materials, gives them complete access to our consumer market, and then we wonder why the people who make shoes and clothing, refrigerators and televisions become redundant. The policy of the Minister of Labour is to pay them 60 per cent of their insurable earnings if they are 54 years of age or more, or if they are 50 years of age and have been working for 30 years, 1,000 hours per year—he may pay them also.

This is not a policy which will allow Canada to develop. The working people of Canada do not want this kind of policy. They need jobs and the opportunity to build and create and to use that creativity.

This is a welfare bill. It may well be that in some of the changing styles of the world the buggy whip goes out of style and people are untrainable for anything else. When they become incapable of changing, after a long period of time, perhaps we should be doing something for them. But surely it can be done under present manpower arrangements and present UIC arrangements. Surely provisions can be made for people who have worked 30 or 40 years in an industry and, because of their age and aptitude, cannot be trained for something else. We can do something for those people to give them recognition for their many years of service in an industry without creating a new board or department and a new bureaucracy of government. That would be nonsense. It is nonsense that this bill should even be before the House for debate.

It is my hope that this session of Parliament will end while this bill is still before the committee so it will die in committee and have to be reintroduced. During that time, the minister may have an opportunity to change the legislation before reintroducing it, or perhaps he may make changes to the UIC and manpower regulations to combine these measures with the bill. We do not need more commissioners and board members to administer a second phase of UIC for those who no longer qualify for UIC benefits or do not qualify for Canada pensions because they can still do some kind of work and are not totally burnt out. We need better proposals than those provided in this bill. We need leadership from the government in terms of a new industrial policy for the country which recognizes that we have a home market in Canada for the products which we can produce here.