

Unemployment Insurance Act, 1971 (No. 2)

avoid all discussions of the misery and insecurity of those employed who are about to lose their jobs. He did not want us to talk about long-awaited changes or what improvements we might suggest to unemployment insurance. He did not want us to talk about the grim employment prospects for students and young people. I do not blame him. He does not want us to talk about that because he wants people to forget about it and talk about the brave new world which will come about with some future legislation. He does not want us to talk about the 1.5 million unemployed, the people who have given up looking for work, the young people in communities with perhaps 20 per cent or 25 per cent unemployment. He does not want us to talk about native unemployment, which runs up to 80 per cent in some communities. I can understand why he does not want us to talk about that. I do not blame him. He said it would be redundant if we were to talk this afternoon about those things because, after all, we have a great chance to talk about those things some other time. Perhaps we will have that opportunity when Bill C-115 is introduced. Interestingly enough, the minister had a proposal that we should introduce that bill for second reading, not waste the time of the House this afternoon with Bill C-114 which everyone favours, but deal with the minister's second reading speech and we could have ours the following week. That was a very generous offer, especially when one considers that the minister would introduce the bill, it would be discussed in the press, and he would be the only one to get any news out of it. I think when we deal with Bill C-115 we should be all here together to discuss it, and each party's critic should have the opportunity to provide input.

So, Mr. Speaker, he does not want us to talk about those things. The government does not want us to talk about lots of things. A committee of the government, though, certainly talks about things. A committee of Liberal members talks about things. Here is a leaked document of a caucus committee, including one cabinet minister and one ex-cabinet minister. What are they talking about? They say:

The political-economic situation is very serious and every effort must be made to improve it.

We cannot disagree with that. The document says:

Committee must help demonstrate that the Liberals have the will and determination to govern.

No one can quarrel with that because they are demonstrating just the opposite at the moment. They are falling apart at the seams. Hardly a week goes by without some backbencher getting up on his hind legs and saying things about his own government which are hardly complimentary. It goes on:

The committee should probe radically alternative ways of revitalizing the economy and of offsetting current hardships.

That is what members of the government are saying. We have been saying that for years now, but the government is now beginning to catch up and talk about things like that, too. But there is a cautionary note here when it says we:

—must ensure that whatever is recommended it be consistent with Liberal philosophy.

I have been here some 14 years and what the Liberal philosophy is completely eludes me, if it is an identifiable philosophical position. There might have been a Liberal philosophy at one time, but what it is today is: do what you have to do and get away with all you can.

Mr. Pepin: That is a philosophy.

Mr. Rose: That is the philosophy. I am glad the minister admitted that is the philosophy. They go on to ask: what do we do and how do we achieve it? The document goes on to say we:—need to break the bureaucratic stranglehold on the system. Structure of government departments frustrates effective direction by ministers and prevents an imaginative, action-oriented approach.

I could go on and on. I am pleased to read that into the record, not just to embarrass the government, but to suggest that even the very prominent members of that government are worried. They look at the polls and are worried. Well they should be, because, as the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton said earlier, the country is worried. We have entered a period of negative growth for the first time since the depression.

I would like to direct the minister, Mr. Speaker, to a very serious matter which is not beyond his ability to correct.

Mr. Kristiansen: Where is he?

Mr. Rose: He is the Scarlet Pimpernel; one minute he is here, the next minute he has gone.

Mr. Nystrom: He is on the telephone.

Mr. Rose: The next time I wish to speak to him, then, I will phone him. He is listening to me on the telephone. I am very pleased to hear that.

An hon. Member: He is out looking for a job.

Mr. Rose: I do not know where he would get a job. In any event, I do not want to proceed as though what I was about to discuss were a frivolous matter or one that I did not care about. It has to do with the farm workers in the Fraser Valley. Many of these people are of one ethnic group. Many of them do not speak English. Many are new immigrants and work for \$1.25 an hour. Many of these people are among the lowest paid people in my riding. They go from job to job as the crops ripen and develop doing farm work. Most of these jobs do not last more than a few weeks. Sometimes they do not last more than a few days. Because they do not last for more than a few days, they cannot work for one employer more than a few days and, therefore, they cannot establish the 25-day minimum necessary for them to qualify for unemployment insurance. I do not know of any other working group of people in society who are discriminated against in the same way that farm workers are. I do not know why this is so. On the other hand, if these people decide not to go to work for an individual farmer—because if they do and they work less than 25 days they do not qualify for unemployment insurance—and instead are employed by a farm labour contractor who can put them to work at several farms over a season, then they do qualify for unemployment I suppose if it works that way in the Fraser