

*Unemployment Insurance Act, 1971*

That is the section he refers to as the special case of fishermen. He goes on to point out the pattern and the conditions of groups of employees and workers excluded from the act which, as the minister might recall, included lumbering, logging, transportation by water and stevedoring. They were excluded under the original act. He goes on to cite the pattern of how one by one these groups were covered under the act, the fishing group being the last, in 1957. Mr. Rigby points out that while it is recognized that it is more difficult for fishermen to gain recognition of the fact that their occupation is different in form, but not in essence, from other industrial employments, they are engaged in employment which is essential rather than exotic or archaic. This is a follow-up of his earlier suggestion that fishing is historic, being among the very first of man's employment endeavours.

He goes on to deal with the question I touched upon about the unfortunate juxtaposition of the final agreement to cover fishermen, with a definite period of high unemployment and the drain on the fund which developed in 1957. He goes on to analyse the drain on the fund, which was commented on by the advisory committee, resulting from the terms and conditions under which fishermen were covered, pointing out that there was a great hue and cry about this annual drain on the fund. He also pointed out that in the general picture this was a pretty small part of the decrease in the fund because for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1958, the balance in the fund declined \$134,241,000, in 1959 it declined \$244,389,000 and in 1960 it declined \$133,919,000. So as Mr. Rigby said:

When these amounts are compared with the committee's own figures, purporting to represent the drain on the fund resulting from fishing coverage, we can only advance a subconscious need of finding a scapegoat to explain the following comments of the committee—

He was referring to what the unemployment insurance advisory committee said in its report dated July 27, 1960, as follows:

The second major drain on the fund is caused by the extension of coverage to the fishing industry. The loss to the fund during the past three years has been approximately \$23,000,000—

This is in response to what we were talking about in terms of a drop in the fund in the order of \$500 million. This is a point I tried to argue at the time the coverage was being developed. I remember telling the then Minister of Labour that fishermen in British Columbia in their wildest dreams never expected the government to come up with the kind of plan it did which, as Mr. Rigby and many others have pointed out, has operated in such a way that those who need it least are the ones who benefit most.

I am trying to suggest that because of this sequence of events, and because the government initially came in with an ill-conceived plan for covering fishermen, it is assumed that there is something wrong with including fishermen in the plan. No one has really gone back to the fundamentals of what might have been done in the first place but was not done. I have here a copy of a resolution adopted by a fishermen group in British Columbia.

**Mr. Mackasey:** What year was it?

[Mr. Barnett.]

**Mr. Barnett:** This was a resolution adopted at the seventeenth annual convention of the UFAWU of 1961. In other words, this was about the time this question was being reviewed by the commission. These are the points they suggest should be considered as far as fishermen coverage is concerned. They said that fishermen should be fully integrated with other employees under the act in all respects, since the majority of fishermen combine fishing with employment in other industries whenever such employment is available. As a matter of fact, I well remember that at the time I expected the government to make it a condition of eligibility under the act that a fisherman make himself available for alternative employment and that he only claim benefits if he had done that and no other employment was available.

**Mr. Jerome:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Before you call it four o'clock, I wonder if unanimous agreement has been reached in respect of carrying on with this debate. There has been discussion and I believe there is disposition to continue this debate past four o'clock, in the hope that it will be concluded not later than 4.30. I think we are very close to the conclusion of the debate and perhaps by 4.30 we will have concluded it. At that time private members' hour could be started, to continue until five o'clock.

**Mr. Bell:** We have just one brief speech left.

**Mr. Schumacher:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to say that I cannot consent to this being done.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Chair has not asked for consent, but the hon. member for Palliser (Mr. Schumacher) has indicated he will not consent.

**Mr. Mackasey:** Mr. Speaker, I would ask the hon. member to reconsider. There is no intention to deny any member the opportunity to speak. We will provide time for anyone else who wants to participate, in addition to time for the regular private members' hour. We could, in effect, extend the time to allow anyone who wishes to do so to participate in private member's hour. I think the hon. member who was speaking has almost exhausted his time.

● (4:00 p.m.)

If we were to extend the time now it would provide an opportunity for other members representing fisheries areas to state their opinions. The hon. member has been very eloquent and I learned a lot about the fishing industry in the 40 minutes during which he spoke. The only thing remaining would be about five minutes for amendments and then we could move on to private members' hour and give the sponsors, to whom I apologize, an opportunity to speak during that hour.

**Mr. Barnett:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey) has made a suggestion. It was four o'clock and there was not unanimous consent for the House not to proceed to private members' business.