

Employment and Immigration

work to finance their further education, but more despondent are the young graduates of community colleges and universities who come looking for job leads. They want to work at anything rather than being on unemployment insurance. I have to be honest and tell them that I am afraid the situation will only get worse.

The government is not serious about restructuring the economy so that there will be job-creation in any meaningful and permanent sense. Rather than getting busy and attacking unemployment, they find it easier to tinker with the unemployment insurance system. When young people are so desperately looking for work, it is wrong for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Cullen) to try to give the impression that they are not serious about working but prefer to flit from one job to another and work only the minimum number of weeks required before collecting unemployment insurance.

Various witnesses who appeared before the committee stressed that the amendments to create areas of differing qualifying periods would mean a bureaucratic nightmare. The unemployment insurance system is difficult enough to administer. It makes no sense to have a regional formula whereby a person living in a high unemployment area may need a shorter qualifying period, and a person who lives in a low unemployment area would need a higher qualifying period. This will create all kinds of injustices.

How is it to be administered? Are we to build a sort of Berlin wall between the various regions of Canada in order to restrict workers who move from one area to another in an effort to find jobs because the bureaucrats claim they are trying to circumvent the regulations this way? I do not think this system is workable, Mr. Speaker, and it will not alleviate the needs of the people, which is what the act was designed to do.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I have to interrupt the hon. member. The time allotted to him has expired.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, I want to speak as one from an area of low unemployment, namely, Saskatchewan, and support my two colleagues from northern Ontario who have just spoken. The amendment proposed by the government will cause hardship in my area as well because it will probably end up as one where people will have to work 14 weeks in order to qualify for unemployment insurance.

An hon. Member: You never worked 14 weeks in your life.

Mr. Nystrom: In spite of the fact that it is an area of low unemployment, some people are in a similar position to those in other areas. There are seven Indian reservations in my constituency, and there are a lot of Indian people living in Yorkton. The city of Regina is now 15 or 20 per cent Métis or Indian. Indians who live on the reservations are not included in unemployment statistics, while those who live in urban areas often need retraining. An increase in the attachment period from eight weeks to 14 weeks will put more of the Indian and Métis people who live in the cities of Regina, Yorkton and

[Mr. Symes.]

Saskatoon on the welfare rolls. This is a cold, bureaucratic way of tackling the problem, and it is one of the things that angers me about the Unemployment Insurance Act.

Another thing that angers me about the act is that it discriminates against many rural people who are disqualified from benefit because they are not available for work. Indeed, some people who come to my office admit they had lied to the Unemployment Insurance Commission in order to receive benefits, and other people who told the truth did not receive benefits. Often, women in a rural area who do not have a car to drive to the city UIC office are cut off benefits, but those who live in the city and can use public transportation to visit the office or to seek work are not cut off. If the rural people lied and said they were looking for work, they would not be cut off either.

Perhaps I should call it one o'clock, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At one o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**CONGRATULATIONS TO SPAIN ON RESTORATION OF PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43**

Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Kootenay): Mr. Speaker, I rise under the provisions of Standing Order 43 on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity, one that even the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) might find acceptable being fresh back from the United Kingdom. At a time when the disappearance of democratic governments is more often noted than their reappearance, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Munro):

That this parliament join in congratulating the people of Spain on the restoration of parliamentary democracy in that country underlining as it does the role of a constitutional monarchy in facilitating the development and retention of parliamentary democracy in a land with great traditions and deep differences.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The presentation of such a motion for debate requires the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.