

valid points, and I assume that the bill will go into committee where there will be some very good discussions.

Mr. Orlikow: Not tonight.

Mr. Kempling: Not tonight, perhaps, but it will go into committee where, through the discussions there, it will be honed a little finer and eased where it is necessary. I would like to say a few words, not on precise parts of the bill or about the regulations, but about the attitude of the people who work in the unemployment insurance offices across this country. I had some experiences with them, but at least I have not had any complaints in the past few months. There have been some dehumanizing experiences, and I have to say that I believe things would not have happened this way if the people concerned had been directed differently. I do not believe they went into the job with the idea of dehumanizing other people who come to them for assistance. I believe it is due to some extent to direction, or to the fact that things are run so loosely so that someone who is a real hardliner is given a free rein. At one time things were so bad that I thought they must have a hit team that was sent from area to area.

● (2120)

I want to mention a few particular cases, Mr. Speaker. Regardless of what hon. members say in this House, or what the provinces say about labour practices, we all know that discrimination is practised against people over 50 years of age. Indeed, it is practised by this government. How many people over 50 years of age have been hired by the government recently? Very few. We all know that it goes in industry. It is against the law, but it is done. In the end, these people go to the unemployment insurance office to seek aid and assistance.

You have been in this House a long time, Mr. Speaker, so I am sure you have handled a lot of cases where women over 50 years of age cannot find a job and end up on unemployment insurance. I have dealt with a number of them in my constituency, and the way some of them have been treated is almost criminal.

There is the case of a 46-year old woman who had been the manager of a department store. She listed her qualifications as manager, buyer, clerk, accountant and supervisor, so she was a very talented person. The department store had closed down and she became unemployed. When she went to the unemployment insurance office to apply for assistance the clerk asked her what she could do. She said, "I have been the manager of a store, a buyer, a clerk, an accountant and supervisor. I can do almost anything in a retail operation." He asked, "What can you do?" She replied, "I have been a manager, a buyer, a clerk, an accountant and a supervisor. I can do almost anything in a retail operation." He said, "What sort of work can you do?" Mr. Speaker, she repeated that six times. Of course the object of the exercise was to get her to blow her stack, as they say—to become so emotional that she would walk out. He could then fill out a form showing that she had a bad attitude toward work. That actually happened, Mr. Speaker.

Unemployment Insurance Act

Then there was a case of a man who was 62 years of age. Try to get a 62-year old a job in this country! He had worked all his life with one employer but the firm was bought out and the new operation cut down and he was let go. He was a veteran and had been a prisoner of war in World War II. He had never applied for unemployment insurance. He was harassed and degraded so much that when he came to my office he was in tears. I was very annoyed about that.

An hon. Member: That is private enterprise.

Mr. Kempling: It was the unemployment insurance office that was harassing him. I went to the office with him and they asked him what he could do other than the job he had been doing. He said he was also a photographer. We got him some work going around to real estate agents in the town and taking photographs of the houses they had for sale. We tried to get the unemployment insurance to make a partial payment to him because he was not making enough money at this photography, but they would not do it. The man was almost inconsolable. He said, "What have I done but work all my life? I have given everything I have to my country, and this is the way I end up?"

The next case is a rather delicate one and I shall skip around the edges of it. A talented young lady had held an administrative job in the \$20,000 per year bracket with an American company that decided to move back to the United States. They wanted her to go with them but she could not because she could not get a work permit for the United States, so she applied for unemployment insurance. As she was single, talented, and wanted a job in the same income bracket, she went to London, to Niagara Falls, to St. Catharines, and to Kitchener, looking for work. She was a rather attractive looking girl. The people at the unemployment insurance office suggested to her that she was a prostitute, and that if she did not do so much hustling she might be available for work. Can you imagine that sort of thing happening? It did. Ultimately, through her own efforts she secured a very good job at a higher salary. They had been giving her a rough time because she would not take a job as a waitress or a gas pump jockey in a service station.

I think these cases illustrate that the management of the UIC must be very careful about the people they hire. If they find they have such attitudes, then they should get rid of them. There is no excuse for dehumanizing people. We cannot tolerate that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kempling: Another man came to me who had gone to the unemployment insurance office to look at the job listings. He had driven a school bus for seven years, and prior to that was a driver-mechanic in the Canadian Armed Forces. There was a job listed for a transport driver. He had an interview with one of the clerks, and because he did not answer a question the right way the clerk—who could not drive a truck, incidentally—said, "I could not recommend you for the job." The job was available and the man had the talents, but the