

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion*

They both painted a very bright picture. Further, during the last federal election campaign the Minister of National Health and Welfare and the Liberal candidate in my area stated that no one—but no one—among these workers who are going to be affected, would suffer. Again I suggest that the government should give consideration to establishing a program similar to the transitional assistance benefit program. I ask, what is the difference? Are the automobile workers any better than the dock workers at North Sydney? Are the dock workers at North Sydney not as good as the automobile workers at Windsor?

I regret that I do not see the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Marchand) in the chamber tonight, as he is the one to whom I have addressed questions on this matter. Of course the Minister of Labour (Mr. Nicholson) is not present either. The Minister of Industry is here and probably he is going to reply. But he is the only minister here, and this is a sad commentary on the interest which the government has in these men who work at the docks in North Sydney. It is another indication of the callous attitude which members of the government have toward unemployment in this country, which is now reaching close to half a million. In a few short months we are going to lose a minimum of another 600 jobs at North Sydney, and I urge the government to do something about it. All we have heard about the matter is talk, ever since Mr. Pickersgill has gone to a higher, more comfortable post.

At the time of his press conference he did not tell the people the truth of what was going to happen. He did not mention that, until he was free from the island of Cape Breton and back in Newfoundland, where he issued a press release. I would hope that the minister who sits before me tonight is not going to give a wordy answer without any meaning to it. I hope he will insist, among his cabinet colleagues, that something be done to assist these workers who are going to be displaced at North Sydney, something along the lines of the program which I understand has worked very well for the automobile workers.

We have a similar situation. The workers at North Sydney are affected by government action. The workers in the automobile industry were affected by government action. If the workers at North Sydney received benefits under such a program it would give them time to secure alternative employment. It would give them a period of years in which

[Mr. Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria).]

to adjust, get settled, and find suitable employment to replace what they are going to lose.

**Hon. C. M. Drury (Minister of Industry):** Mr. Speaker, without knowing exactly what point the hon. member for Cape Breton North and Victoria (Mr. Muir) was intending to make, there perhaps has not been called into the house tonight the minister who could most appropriately reply. I will agree with him that the minister most familiar with this particular problem and the possible solution to it would be the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Marchand).

As the hon. gentleman has pointed out, the temporary assistance program which he cited is applicable to and was designed only for those adversely affected by the Canada-United States automotive agreement of 1965. He has suggested that this be extended to cover all people whose employment has been dislocated as a consequence of government action. I am sure the hon. gentleman will recognize that this would cover very large numbers of people and that perhaps if a program of this type were introduced it would tend to inhibit the government in taking the kind of constructive progressive actions that are needed in order to achieve not only a fairer distribution of the wealth in Canada but also to attempt to increase the total wealth in which all of us may have a greater share.

I am filled with sympathy concerning the plight of those in North Sydney who have been thrown out of work as a consequence of this. Over the past number of months I have taken a very considerable interest in the various mechanisms available to the federal government in an effort to increase employment opportunities in the Cape Breton area. I believe the hon. gentleman is aware of the very substantial efforts made by the federal government to improve opportunities there, perhaps not specifically related to the car ferry but in general terms. As he knows, the area development agency has been of some assistance in attracting new manufacturing investments and therefore in providing new jobs in manufacturing. The Cape Breton Development Corporation is dedicated to the purpose of increasing employment opportunities in the Cape Breton area, including North Sydney.

**Mr. Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria):** At the same time employment opportunities are being reduced.