

Government Orders

eration we still belong to. If there are very few military bases and colleges in Quebec, it is because, at the time, there was a trade-off for more military contracts. But with the changing international situation, these military contracts are going up in smoke. Not only that, but the few that are left in Quebec must have spin-offs across Canada.

So, as you can see, Quebec is a loser with this budget and, on top of that, Bill C-17 hits it again. This bill victimizes the unemployed instead of setting up a retraining program for the 1,000 people who will lose their job in Saint-Jean. Once again we are sidelined. The government remains insensitive to our plea. For all those reasons, I am very happy to announce that my party and I will vote against Bill C-17.

• (1200)

[English]

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise a few points on Bill C-17. There are many problems with it depending on which area one would want to approach it from.

Often we hear the other side of the House say they are concerned that the Reform Party does not support this or the Reform Party does not support that. This certainly is a prime example of what happens. They jam a lot of different areas all together. If we turn one down because there is something in there we do not like, they say we are against everything.

I mentioned in the past how they did that with the Charlottetown accord. It was not just the other side but in fact all parties at that time. They had this huge, all-encompassing accord. Then after the people of Canada in their wisdom decided to turn it down they forever more are saying each and every part of that accord was rejected.

Some people voted against it because they did not like the fact it was almost impossible to amend it. Some people did not like the way the Senate was set up. Some people did not like the arrangements for the province of Quebec. Some people did not like it because of the concept of aboriginal self-government with no definition as to what it really was. The aboriginal people themselves did not like it. Yet every time now that we come back to one of the issues in there the government says: "You had your chance and you turned it down".

So it is with Bill C-17. The government likes to say we are against the individual parts of this, but of course we cannot be against the individual parts. We are not allowed. We either accept it in whole or reject it in whole. There are many areas in there.

I talked in the past about the transportation subsidies. Unemployment insurance is another example where the government is saying we are turning something down that we should be embracing. The government in fact is twisting our very words.

Under unemployment insurance they are dropping the rates from \$3.30 to \$3 and then we are chastised for making any comment against its action. The reality is they were the ones who put it up to \$3.30 in the first place. Then they say a company with 10 people or 50—I cannot remember the magic number used—is going to save all these thousands of dollars with which it can hire new employees. The reality is that nothing has been saved because it was a charge imposed by the government in the first place.

If it were true, and I pointed this out to the Minister of Human Resources Development before, it should have put the rate up by \$3 instead of 30 cents and then dropped it back down. That way the companies would save 10 times as much and all our economic problems would be over.

The reality is whether we should be debating the implementation of this budget at all. It is already out of date. The budget will not work. It has not taken into account the impact and the effect it has had on our economy already, how it has shaken the confidence of international lenders around the world. Our foreign bond credit rating has dropped. The stock market has dropped. Interest rates have climbed and our dollar has dropped. We are in big trouble and it started with this budget.

It is time the government realized this is not a budget that is going to work for Canadians. Instead of debating this we should be setting it aside and working together to develop a new budget, one that will really work and one that will address the real needs of the Canadian public.

We have to oppose the bill because it is the implementation of a variety of acts, some of which might be good but many of which will not work. It works toward passing an overall budget which itself is flawed and already out of date.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the position taken by my colleague for Mercier regarding the amendment to Bill C-17 which changes the rules applicable to Unemployment Insurance.

Using as a base provisions contained in the 1994 Budget, the government has considerably changed the rules of the game as far as UI is concerned, without resorting to a special bill. I stress that fact, because the proposed changes are more than a simple change of rules.