

earned the top buck while working and before becoming unemployed? Let us find out.

The people in this group are the claimants whose earnings were less than one third of the maximum, \$185 a week, or in other words less than \$62 a week, because the scheme is based on a percentage of earnings. Therefore workers with families, particularly those on low incomes and in severe difficulty, even when employed would face extreme hardship.

Let us look at these workers who earn \$62 a week or less. One of the statistics provided by the minister shows that this particular group of workers which will become unemployed represents .2 per cent of the total claim load. It is interesting to note that when we go to the extended benefit period that particular group becomes 7.4 per cent of the total claim load.

Mr. Speaker: Presumably the House will want to resume at this point.

THE ROYAL ASSENT

[English]

A message was delivered by the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod as follows:

Mr. Speaker, the Deputy of His Excellency, the Governor General, desires the immediate attendance of this honourable House in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members will want to know this is probably Colonel Fortier's last appearance in this role.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, with the House went up to the Senate chamber.

● (2030)

And being returned:

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have the honour to inform the House that when the House did attend His Honour the Deputy to His Excellency the Governor General in the Senate chamber, His Honour was pleased to give in Her Majesty's name the Royal Assent to the following bills:

Bill C-79, Appropriation Act No. 4, 1975—Chapter No. 74.

Bill C-73, An Act to provide for the restraint of profit margins, prices, dividends and compensation in Canada.—Chapter No. 75.

Bill C-2, An Act to amend the Combines Investigation Act and the Bank Act and to repeal an Act to amend an Act to amend the Combines Investigation Act and the Criminal Code.—Chapter No. 76.

Bill S-27, An Act to amend the Canadian Overseas Telecommunication Corporation Act.—Chapter No. 77.

Bill C-76, An Act to wind up The King George V Silver Jubilee Cancer Fund for Canada and to authorize the sale of the assets and securities of the Fund and to transfer the sale proceeds and the balance of moneys to the National Cancer Institute of Canada.—Chapter No. 78.

Unemployment Insurance Act GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT, 1971

MEASURE TO ADD NEW CLASS OF INSURABLE EMPLOYMENT

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-69, to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1971, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration, and of motions Nos. 7, 8, 14 and 15 standing in the names of the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) and the hon. member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez).

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, as I was asking before I was so rudely interrupted—

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. Rodriguez:—who are the latest victims of government restraint? I am most concerned about this because tomorrow the government will announce its restraint program, and what it is prepared to do to cut back its expenditures so that it can show to the Canadian people that it is about to fight inflation. If this legislation is an example of what we saw earlier this afternoon when the government brought in an amendment to the Unemployment Insurance Act to remove 65 year old people from contributing and collecting under the act, then we will see another aspect of that restraint program. I fear what is to be announced tomorrow in terms of the sacrifice the government is prepared to make on social legislation and on social programs in its so-called fight or great war against inflation.

Who are these people who are getting the dependency rate? We are told by the government and by the Unemployment Insurance Commission nabobs who are in the gallery that these are the people who earn \$62 or less. They are the people who qualify for the dependency rate provided they have one, two, three, or more children. I was pointing out earlier that the minister told us in committee that this group of persons who are collecting the dependency rate represent .2 per cent of the total claim load. It is interesting to note that in the extended benefit period it jumps to 7.4 per cent of the total claim load, and that is an important distinction to make because these are the people who are the poorest of claimants and who obviously are the longest on unemployment insurance.

It is absolutely imperative that if these people are spending so much time on unemployment insurance, there ought to be some make up for the cost and the upkeep of their dependants. We might ask what was at the back of the mind of the government when it brought in this clause in 1971. Surely there must have been a reason for it in the first place. I realize that the government does not need reasons, but all we can go on is the report which was prepared for the particular minister at the time. It is interesting to note that it is called "Some background notes on the unemployment insurance program", and this deals with the dependency rate. These are the reasons, and I quote: