

*Unemployment Insurance Act*

can learn to expect from government departments if we desire it. It was quite unusual in my experience to have Department of Fisheries representatives at our meeting and to have them allowed to discuss freely in committee the problem of the fishing industry in that it experienced lack of coverage under the Unemployment Insurance Act. I felt that it was possibly something that should have been done. In discussing this particular question I sincerely hope that the government and hon. members will seriously consider the inclusion of fishermen in order to give them coverage under this Unemployment Insurance Act. It is one of the unfortunate things in this country that we should have so many classes of people who are not covered by unemployment insurance. I go wholeheartedly along with the hon. member for Cape Breton South when he suggests that we should not see to it that fewer classes are covered by this Unemployment Insurance Act but rather that more of them should be covered.

If this act is to do the job that it should do, then in time we must include every wage earner within the country. Otherwise its effect is not fully felt. These fishermen who have asked from time to time to be covered are one of that group. I am not going to say any more along that line because in the committee I said what I had to say. I am also satisfied that each and every member who represents a fishing constituency had the privilege of coming to the committee and directing his remarks to us, and every one who did so received a proper hearing. The result is the recommendation that was made for the inclusion of these fishermen at this time.

There is, however, this other matter to which I should like to speak. I refer to the recommendation in respect of the inclusion of a woman on the unemployment insurance commission and on the advisory committee. In her plea for greater recognition of women on the commission, the hon. member for Hamilton West had many interesting arguments. I listened to them closely and I am satisfied that most of us have heard them previously from time to time. However, I cannot go wholeheartedly along with the proposal, for several reasons. One of the first and main reasons is this. Does labour recognize the representation of women on committees? If so, under what circumstances? I am satisfied that women have a place in this country, as they have in every nation, but certainly they are not necessarily entitled to an equal representation on committees having regard to the proportion in which they might be employed in industry. If that were so, we could go along a step further and

[Mr. Hahn.]

say that as one-half of the people in this country are women we should therefore legislate to the effect that at least half the members of this house must be women. I do not say that would not be a good thing. We might get better legislation thereby. But I think we should leave that matter to those who are in the position to decide—in this instance the employees—as to whether or not they are desirous of having that provision. Let the employees themselves prove to us that they are anxious to have that number included on the committee or on the commission by proposing in their own union that one-quarter of the elected executive should be women.

This matter of choice, of course, in my opinion is best borne out by the people in her own riding. I am sure the only reason we have the hon. member for Hamilton West with us is that the men in her riding were quite willing to recognize the fact that she was equally capable of holding her own and possibly doing better than that in this house and therefore they have returned her on more than one occasion. The same thing applies in labour legislation. If there is found in this nation a woman who, in the opinion of the government or those who administer the act, is capable of taking her place on the commission and they are desirous that she should be on that commission, I would wholeheartedly support the idea of having a lady on it. But I cannot completely go along with the argument as to the need for a woman on the committee. I do not think that we have had any particular brief brought forward showing that women were being discriminated against. Certainly the argument with respect to class legislation so far as married women are concerned was listened to closely and remedial measures were suggested; they were quite satisfactory ones too, I must say.

As to increasing the commission to five, I cannot agree with that suggestion either. I see no need for further government expenditure in order to increase a commission merely for the purpose of adding certain classes of people to it. If a three-man commission is incapable of doing the work which it is set up to do, then I would say that we should add to it. But if the commission can and does administer the act and has proved that it is capable of doing a good job, I see no need to increase its number to five at this time.

I come back, however, to an earlier part of my discussion with regard to the fact that certain classes of individuals are denied the right to be covered by the Unemployment Insurance Act. During the course of the discussions in the committee I asked for certain