

*Unemployment Insurance*

seasonal workers was not actuarially sound, provision should then be made in some other way to meet the deficit so that these groups of people would not be a charge upon the fund itself and upon those who contributed to the fund who were doing so on what was a reasonable actuarial basis. It seems to me that is a reasonable position to take.

The question then is, how should the replenishment be done? I listened to the very interesting speech, except for the beginning and end which I must say I did not think very much of, made by the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Browne) who suggested that the fund should be replenished by an additional contribution or tax collected from all employed persons but not from those who have private incomes or from pensioners or retired people.

It does not seem to me, sir, that this segregation of one section of the population, however large it may be, makes much sense. It does seem to me that if we decided, as we decided when we first put seasonal workers under unemployment insurance, that we were going to use the Unemployment Insurance Act as a vehicle not merely for pure insurance of the actuarially sound cases but also to deal with the other related social problem of seasonal unemployment that has to be dealt with—I quite agree with the minister it must be dealt with humanely but our complaint is it has not been dealt with humanely enough—those groups covered by the act who are not covered in an actuarial way should be covered by the treasury, by all of us, by the community.

That is the position that the hon. member for Essex East took three years ago. It is the position that was taken by the former government when it was in office. It seems to me that, notwithstanding the repudiation of that position by the minister today, it is the only right and proper position to take in this matter.

I was astonished, sir, to hear the minister say that he had found that officials in the United States regarded conditions in Canada as being so much better than they were in the United States. This, of course, is not the truth. The statistics that are published by the dominion bureau of statistics and the corresponding United States statistics show that that statement is not accurate and is very far indeed from being accurate.

The minister talked about the optimism he found in the United States, and contrasted it with the gloom and doom he found in his own country where, apparently, the only people who are listened to by the minister and his colleagues are Liberals. It seemed to me that perhaps the minister was getting us ready for another "Follow John" campaign.

However, this time there is a difference and the "John" we are to follow is not here in Ottawa but in Washington. I do not believe the notion that we should just let the United States solve its problems and hope that ours will be solved in the wash, is going to satisfy the Canadian people. The Canadian people want action from their government, as the right hon. gentleman pointed out in 1955, and they want action now.

The minister referred to the fact there was a mention in the speech from the throne of amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act. The speech from the throne was delivered almost six months ago, and the report of the unemployment insurance advisory committee was, I gather, received about that time or even before that time. At any rate, the problem was certainly known when this announcement was made in the speech from the throne. A serious change had been made in the administration of the act adversely affecting thousands of Canadians who want to work as carpenters or in other forms of casual labour. These people want to follow the advice of the minister, and "do it now". They felt they had covered themselves, having bought stamps and having taken advantage of the employment offer, only to find they were cut off from benefits because of this rigorous interpretation. I say that the minister should have introduced amendments to this legislation when that decision was made.

**Mr. Pearson:** It is not ready yet.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** It is not ready yet; as a matter of fact, I doubt if one word has been put down on the first draft of the bill. Of course, they do not know when this legislation will be introduced, just as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fleming) does not know what he is going to put in his budget. Perhaps they will not be able to decide what they can do about any of these things until the by-elections are over.

The minister talked about the 23 measures the government had brought in this year. He made a statement which is not in accord with the *Hansard* record, perhaps that is the best way of putting it, about the attitude of this party toward those measures. As a matter of fact, we shocked and annoyed the government by omitting the debate on the address so we could get on with the government's legislation. In most cases, we only made one or two speeches on these bills in order to get them through and give them a chance to work. We did not think much of some of them, but we said, give them a chance. What did hon. gentlemen on the government side of the house do? They talked and talked, just as they did last Saturday afternoon, saying what a good fellow the minister was and how