

Supply

billion debt from which Canada is suffering than to simply call them vultures.

There is evidence that the prosperity certainly is not there and has been going down. In the 1950s the disposable income of Canadians grew by about 34 per cent. In the 1960s it grew by about 22 per cent. In the 1970s it grew by about 22 per cent and in the 1980s, an appalling .5 per cent.

The government wonders why prosperity has not arrived. Canadians know very well it has not arrived. Canadians know that they certainly do not have the disposable income which they had in previous times. As someone who worked through the 1960s and 1970s, I can certainly attest to the demise of disposable income, that income which Canadians spend and consumers spend, which fuels the economy and leads to prosperity within a country.

If consumers do not have the money to spend, the economy is certainly going to suffer. The government has certainly done everything it can to limit that.

I would also like to refer to the vicious provision of the mini budget which was brought down last week whereby those who are fired or quit their jobs are excluded from being able to collect unemployment insurance.

The fact of the matter is that people who find themselves in that position immediately lose their source of income. It is not a matter of a seven to 12 week heist of the ability to collect unemployment insurance anymore. They will not get it until they prove that they quit for cause if they just quit their jobs. There may be any number of reasons why people would quit their jobs and any number of reasons which they would not necessarily want to make public. Much reference has been made to sexual harassment. I can understand why women particularly would not want to make this public and thereby would exclude themselves from the ability to collect unemployment insurance after having removed themselves from an intolerable situation.

• (1700)

The minimum amount of weeks which a person can qualify for is 17. The maximum number of weeks which a person can qualify for is 50. If collecting the maximum, which I believe is \$426, in either of those two situations, these provisions mean that without any recourse to protection, without any recourse to due process, those people are potentially facing a fine of \$7,242, which in

our society is a very sizeable fine for any number of offences, civil or criminal.

In a similar situation at a maximum of 50 weeks where a person may possibly not be able to get a job having left it, because heaven only knows there sure are not many jobs out there to be had, the maximum fine is \$21,300. I maintain it has to be looked at as a potential fine which someone could very well have to suffer for having quit their job.

We have corporations in this country that have been charged for polluting our oceans, that have gone through the whole process while being able to defend themselves, and been fined \$2,000. However, if you quit your job you could be fined \$21,300. You pollute our waters and you are probably not going to have to pay any more than \$2,000. I would suggest that that exemplifies the absolute crooked thinking that this government seems bent upon.

It shows a disdain for people which is certainly exemplified in spades in these provisions. People will be excluded from collecting unemployment insurance under those conditions. It is not satisfactory. It is not tolerable in our society that people have to suffer that kind of economic loss without the benefit of due process, without the ability to defend themselves before the fine is paid.

I know of no instances in this country where under the normal process of jurisprudence, if that is the right word, people pay a fine before the system has decided what the fine should be.

I reiterate that this is one of the most vicious provisions that any government in the history of country has ever brought forward and shows the absolute disdain, I would suggest probably even bordering on hate, which this government obviously has for people.

The minister is very quick to mention the numbers of people who quit voluntarily. I would suggest that he ought to be coming up with the numbers of women who quit because they cannot tolerate the situation they find themselves in due to sexual harassment or other forms of harassment within the workplace. He cannot do that because so many of those women will not divulge that kind of information, will not make those kinds of personal situations known and the minister never will be able to find those out, nor will society. I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that that happens over and over again. I would suggest it would be well worth while for the minister to spend more time trying to alleviate that kind of situation than to be so quick coming forward with the number of people who voluntarily quit.