

Unemployment Insurance Act

introduced diesel locomotives because at least with the old steam engines we were employing people. Everybody knew how many cars were going to be attached to a train and they knew that at least a little of the coal to operate those engines was going to be produced in Canada by Canadians.

I am not suggesting that we should turn back the pages of time, but are we not doing just that every time we ask for a subsidy for Canadian National Railways in order to allow the Canadian Pacific Railway to maintain freight rates that will permit unfair competition and let them show a profit while you and I and the Canadian people have to carry the terrific deficit of the C.N.R.? I think that now is the time to look at this problem. The minister has suggested that he is going to consider it. All I am asking is that he speed up his timetable and that he look at it before he brings in the bill which this resolution precedes.

In a political sense I am not in a position and most people in Canada are not, I think, to say what is the over-all solution. However, I believe that if a committee were set up to work on the problem strenuously and if all those involved in the transportation field would come to Ottawa and co-operate with the committee, in a matter of a few months that committee would be able to arrive at a policy. In that regard we must consider the fact, as the minister pointed out, that such a committee would have the great advantage of having the benefit of the work of the MacPherson commission which in the last few years has looked into this problem from almost every aspect. They have made a limited number of recommendations, but I think they have assembled enough information to make it possible for us to develop a program that would provide us with an up to date, modern transportation authority capable of transporting the goods we are producing and the natural resources coming out of our mines, forests and farms. Such an authority would also assure people working on the railroads and on other forms of transportation of guaranteed jobs for a certain period of time.

This feeling of insecurity about jobs is a most serious problem. There are few people working on the railways, whether it be the C.N.R. or C.P.R., who really care about their jobs because of the fact that they are not sure whether they will still hold those jobs a day or a year from now. May I call it five o'clock?

The Deputy Chairman: It being five o'clock it is my duty to leave the chair in

order that the house may proceed to consideration of private members' business pursuant to section 3 of standing order 15.

Progress reported.

Mr. Speaker: The house will now proceed to consideration of private members' business as listed at page 29 of today's order paper, namely notices of motion.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT**SUGGESTED PAYMENT OF BENEFITS TO FARM LABOUR**

Mr. Reynold Rapp (Humboldt-Melfort-Tisdale) moved:

That, in the opinion of this house, the government should consider the advisability of amending the Unemployment Insurance Act so that seasonal farm labourers would receive benefits similar to those paid at the present time to seasonal fishermen.

He said: Mr. Speaker, on rising to speak on my motion to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act so that seasonal farm labourers would receive benefits similar to those paid at the present time to seasonal fishermen, I would like to direct your attention to the word "seasonal." The reason I have used this word is because I think the labour force on the prairies is mostly seasonal, in contrast to the employed labour force in the central provinces. The fact that there are so many seasonally unemployed farm labourers has aroused the interest of farm people who wish to obtain some form of unemployment insurance coverage for farm workers, and this interest has developed largely as the result of social and economic advances.

When the present government assumed office in 1957 the Unemployment Insurance Act was amended in order to have its provisions include seasonal fishermen, but nothing was done to have the seasonal farm labourers included. As a result of that omission they still remain outside the benefits of the act. As a matter of fact they comprise the only section of our labour force which is not covered by unemployment insurance, and they are the only group of people in Canada today who are left to fight the hardships of unemployment on their own. They are the only ones who receive no assistance from the government whatsoever. Having talked to these people one gets the impression that they feel discriminated against and segregated from the rest of the labour force.

This is not the first time I have brought such a motion before the house. I believe I have introduced a similar motion every session and, due to that fact, the Minister of Labour has given consideration to my request and to the request of other hon. members