

many fishermen—and here I am talking about west coast fishermen—earn more in the few months they are working than some guys will earn working a whole year in a factory. They work for a few months and collect unemployment insurance for the rest of the time. Up until recently that was not taxable income. At least now it is taxable income.

I remember the time when people in jobs were using seniority in order to hang on to their jobs. But when the time comes that people use their seniority in order to get laid off so that they can collect unemployment insurance, then I say our society and the motivations at work in our society have to be looked at again.

It is not a question that people do not understand. I have many people who call me and ask about their rights under the Unemployment Insurance Act. When they are talking to me they may say, "I guess you are not very happy about what I am doing. I am not happy either. I know I am ripping it off, but then everybody is doing it."

An hon. Member: Everybody is not doing it.

Mr. Saltzman: I am saying that there are tremendous abuses of the act the way things are set up now. In effect, it has become a disaster area. The time has probably come when it must be changed from a separate attempt to maintain income and become a far more comprehensive program that includes income for all kinds of losses, integrated with workmen's compensation and other plans.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order. I regret having to interrupt the hon. member but he is engaging in a rather wide examination of the Unemployment Insurance Act. I think he should return as quickly as possible to the motion that is in front of us, which is really directed to one special type of case covered by the act, as put forward by the hon. member for Halton-Wentworth.

Mr. Saltzman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can understand your concern. If I have ranged somewhat widely it was for the purpose of demonstrating how ridiculous it was to try to make any change in the Unemployment Insurance Act in this case.

In effect the motion is an attempt to point out that there is an abuse in the provisions of the Unemployment Insurance Act. Payments are being collected from some people who simply have no way of collecting benefits. What I am suggesting to the hon. member who moved this motion is that to argue anything on a rational basis to try to get an adjustment of the provisions of this act is pouring water into a sieve.

● (1740)

I want to conclude what I have to say but I hope, Mr. Speaker, that you will appreciate why it had to be put in that somewhat larger context. We now have a situation that we are paying for because a former minister of the Crown could not get his way in cabinet in terms of economic policies and he was going to solve all of the welfare problems of our society in one fell swoop through unemployment insurance. The consequences of that attempt have been very harsh and have changed in many ways the psyche of our society very much for the worse. I

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think it is time that some serious corrections to the Unemployment Insurance Act were made, though not along the line of suggestions made today because something far more fundamental will be required.

Mr. Mark MacGuigan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons I have enjoyed listening to the contribution of the hon. member for Halton-Wentworth (Mr. Kempling) and the hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge (Mr. Saltzman) is that the positions which they have suggested this afternoon are not typical of those their parties normally take. I recognize, of course, that the Conservative Party has tried to play it both ways on unemployment insurance. Normally, I think, the majority of them like to come down on the tough side, but here we have the hon. member for Halton-Wentworth pleading for more benefits. By contrast we have the member from the New Democratic Party taking a tough line on unemployment insurance. Knowing that he is somewhat an individualist, I am not sure that he presages the views of his party on all points involving unemployment insurance, but it is interesting to hear such views from that corner of the House.

The hon. member for Halton-Wentworth began by saying the this was a very straightforward matter and he thought we would make it too complicated. I may say that is just what we have to do, not because we are making it complicated but because the facts and legislation do so. The presentation that the hon. member gave is somewhat too simple for the situation. I refer to the inaccuracies both in the motion and in the comments which he made this afternoon. There are some five or six of these which change his perspective considerably.

I should like to begin by quoting from the notice of motion, which reads:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of amending the Unemployment Insurance Act, to remove the inequity whereby a contributor under the Act, who is not resident in Canada, cannot receive benefits upon becoming unemployed outside of Canada and, in fact, receives no benefit from those contributions upon returning to Canada.

The first objection I would take is to the last clause in the motion which states that a person who is not resident in Canada and has paid contributions receives no benefit from these contributions upon returning to Canada. Mr. Speaker, that is not so. In his spoken remarks this afternoon, I take it that the hon. member for Halton-Wentworth was repudiating the statement in his motion and suggesting—

Mr. Kempling: Not at all.

Mr. MacGuigan: The hon. member says "Not at all", but the suggestion orally was not that no benefits could be obtained but that there was a 12-week wait. It seems to me that is a contradiction of what he suggests in his motion.

Mr. Kempling: I said 8-week.

Mr. MacGuigan: Well, I took down the figure 12 at the time the hon. member said it. In any event, he is wrong on both counts, whether he is saying that there are no benefits when they return to Canada or is suggesting that they must wait for 12 weeks or 8 weeks. Such a person is in