

Mr. Broadbent: I suspected that. I also suspect that the minister's official would have the answers available if he were to ask. However, I would like to ask him a supplementary question. Considering that the change in financing the unemployment insurance scheme is in reality a disguised tax, particularly on those in Canada who earn \$8,300 or less per year, can the minister give the House the estimates of his department of the likely increase to be raised by the UIC in the form of increased premiums in each of the next three years?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, that will have to be dealt with more fully after consultation with my colleague the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, and it depends a good deal upon how quickly the private account deficit is to be retired.

ABANDONMENT OF FIXED LEVEL OF UNEMPLOYMENT
BEYOND WHICH GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR FINANCING
PROGRAM—EFFECT ON UNEMPLOYMENT LEVEL

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): I will give the minister our estimates in the debate later on.

I would like to ask the Minister of Manpower and Immigration if he considers the abandonment of the fixed norm of 4 per cent in favour of a fluctuating percentage level, which no doubt will reach 6 per cent as early as next year and well beyond that in the year after, to be a policy or a course of action which flatly contradicts one of the key philosophical principles underlying the existing Unemployment Insurance Act, and argued for by the previous minister of labour when he brought it in, namely, that by having a fixed norm the government would be under pressure to keep unemployment levels down?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I do not consider it abandonment of the principle at all. I think it is a practical adjustment to reality, and I have no doubt that the government will always consider itself under extreme pressure to alleviate unemployment to the best of its ability.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

REQUEST FOR ESTIMATE OF SAVING AS RESULT OF PROPOSED
AMENDMENTS

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): In view of the fact that the insurance benefit payout will be running at about \$1 billion more than it did last year, and in view of the fact that when proposals for amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act were made the last time it was indicated the Canadian people would save about \$100 million, can the minister now advise what the savings will be with respect to the amendments proposed? Has he any figure in that regard?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): I hope to place that kind of information before the House when the bill is placed before the House.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Oral Questions

Mr. Alexander: Has the minister any information as to the amount of savings which will be involved as a result of taking off the unemployment insurance roles those persons who are 65 years of age? Has he considered that, and has he any figures in terms of what it will mean in long term savings?

Mr. Andras: As I indicated a moment ago, that will be a component part of the information I wish to place before the House in the immediate future.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS

MINISTER'S VIEW OF APPROPRIATENESS OF LABOUR'S SHARE
OF NATIONAL INCOME

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Labour. On Friday last I asked the Minister of Finance if he was satisfied that the present level of net national income going to labour of 73.3 per cent, which is still down from the 75 per cent of four years ago, was appropriate under the circumstances, and the minister said that would be made clear on the night of the budget. With respect, I do not think it was. Can the Minister of Labour now indicate to the House whether the government takes the position, in view of things the Minister of Finance said on Monday night, that labour's share of the net national income of 73.3 per cent in the first quarter of this year is as high as that share ought to go under the present circumstances? Can the minister give us an answer?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I can only add to what the Minister of Finance has indicated with respect to his budget. We feel it is a fair and equitable budget, and it will be for the benefit of workers in Canada.

Mr. Hees: John told you that was the thing to say.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Fraser: The Minister of Labour has not added much to what the Minister of Finance said. I would ask the Minister of Labour whether his answer amounts to an indication to labour in this country that its present share of the net national income is appropriate and is as high as it ought to go under the present circumstances. Surely the minister can give us the answer because that bears on policy, and it bears on the attitude toward labour in view of the budget.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Naturally it is the objective of this government that the workers of this country share in an ever increasing proportion in our national wealth. This budget has been designed to bring economic prosperity to a much greater degree in Canada, and it will achieve just that purpose.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Fraser: In view of the answer he has just given, how does the minister square his answer with page eight of the budget speech as printed where the Minister of Finance