

asks that he be covered out of his unemployment insurance; that is another question, equally important, but not now before us. We are talking about John Doe who became unemployed because there was no job for him. John Doe subsequently qualified for unemployment insurance benefits and began to receive them. But while he was unemployed, during that period, he became ill. His wife went to the unemployment insurance to collect the benefits, but when she reported that he was ill, he was cut off. There was still no job for him. Had he been well, and had he been able to go and draw his benefits, there being no job for him, he would have drawn them. The only point I am asking the minister to consider just now is the question: would it upset the actuarial soundness of the plan to enlarge its provisions to cover a case of that kind?

I repeat that I am quite prepared, at the proper time, to argue and press the claim for complete health insurance, indeed for overall social insurance, covering all the things which happen to us, which are beyond our control; but for purposes of my present argument I accept the minister's statement that we are dealing with something that has an actuarial basis, and within that framework I have asked him to deal with a particular kind of case.

While I am on my feet I should like to ask the other question, so that I shall not have to quarrel again with the hon. member for St. Paul's for the floor.

Mr. SINCLAIR: Let us have that question answered.

Mr. KNOWLES: All right; the hon. member for Vancouver North suggests that we have this question dealt with.

Mr. MITCHELL: In the first place, I never heard of this case until it was mentioned this evening by the hon. member for Vancouver East, and I should like to take a look at it myself. From the mere fact that a person writes a letter, it does not necessarily follow what is in the letter is a statement of fact. I should like the hon. member to give me the letter privately so that my officials in Vancouver, if it is in Vancouver, may look at the case. Most of these matters go over my desk, but this is the first I have heard of it. In view of the discussion which we have had this evening and the number of complaints which have been expressed by hon. members here, having in mind that we have three and a quarter million people insured, I think that is a pretty fair batting average. However I would be grateful to my hon. friend if he

could give me the correspondence confidentially so that I can have my officials look at it.

Mr. KNOWLES: Both the hon. member for Vancouver East and I will do so.

Mr. SINCLAIR: I can tell the minister it is not an unusual case. I know of several such cases in the shipyards of North Vancouver, where men went on unemployment insurance and then became ill. There was still no work for them, but their benefits were cut off. Whatever minute saving might be made cannot compare as against the distress to such a man who, if he needed the benefits when he was well, certainly needed them far more when he was sick. I suggest that it is not a case for the exercise of ministerial discretion so much as a case for a ruling on the general principle of whether, when a man becomes ill while in receipt of unemployment insurance, and still no employment presents itself, he should not continue to draw his benefits.

Mr. MERRITT: In making his statement this afternoon, the minister referred to the situation which occurs in Vancouver almost every winter, when large numbers of unemployed come to town looking for jobs. As the minister knows, that creates quite a difficult situation for the Vancouver authorities and the community chest. This year that body carried out a survey and found that fifty per cent of those unemployed at that time came from out of town. They thought part of the trouble, part of the reason the relief for these unemployed falls upon their shoulders so heavily, is that unemployment insurance benefits are, as a rule, not paid during the nine-day period.

I want to ask the minister three questions, of which the first is this. If I understood him correctly, this afternoon he mentioned that a thirty-six day advance could be made on production of the unemployment insurance book. Does this mean that a person coming into the unemployment insurance office in Vancouver, though he did not work or make his contributions there, on production of his book giving the proper information can get an advance of thirty-six days, from an office where his records are not kept?

Mr. MITCHELL: Yes, that is being provided for in the bill. I will go into that later, but at the present we are still at the resolution stage.

Mr. MERRITT: The minister mentioned the thirty-six day advance this afternoon; that is why I asked.

Mr. MITCHELL: That is right.