

Unemployment Insurance Act

it is necessary to set up a separate insurance scheme for fishermen under another scheme, but I thank him for the assurance he has given me that he is going to continue these studies to see if some feasible plan can be worked out whereby fishermen may have the security they so earnestly desire.

Mr. Gregg: I can give that assurance.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 28 and 29 agreed to.

On clause 30—*Decisions of commission.*

Mrs. Fairclough: Mr. Chairman, I do not wish to see this clause pass until I have had an opportunity to reiterate the opinion I hold, and which I expressed in the industrial relations committee. It applies equally to clause 34. I refer to the fact that under these clauses the claimant is prohibited from seeking justice in the courts. In spite of explanations that were given in the standing committee, I still think there should be an opportunity for the claimant to appear before a court to state his case if he is dissatisfied with the treatment he has received.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 31 as amended agreed to.

Clauses 32 to 45 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 46 as amended agreed to.

On clause 47—*Rates of benefit.*

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, clause 47 is one which, like many others, was discussed at some length in the committee. I just wish to reiterate briefly some of the points that were made at that time. Some of us feel that provision should be made for both contributions and benefits for at least one more income bracket in addition to those provided in the schedule set out in this clause. We also feel that the relationship of the benefit to the average weekly income should be more favourable than that which is provided under this new scale.

There are always those who argue that unemployment benefits must not be too large lest their size encourage people to stay unemployed rather than seek work. Frankly, I am not impressed with that argument. Most people would much rather be employed, aside altogether from the fact that they are interested in having a decent livelihood and a decent income. I hope consideration will yet be given to increasing the amount of benefits so as to make them a larger percentage of the income lost in time of unemployment.

The other point I wish to make is this, Mr. Chairman. There is an advantage, and we welcome it, in the fact that contributions

will be made on a weekly basis even though an employee is employed only two or three days in a week. In a case where an employee is on part time, the contribution he pays in will be in relation to the amount he actually receives in that week rather than on the basis of the amount per week that he is supposed to be earning. That is fine at the point where the employee is making his contribution, and it is fine that even a contribution for a partial week counts as a full week in determining a benefit period. However, when a person who has been irregularly employed comes to the point of drawing his unemployment insurance benefit, he will find that although he thought he was in the \$30 class, he will not get the benefit of the \$30 because the short time he has had will result in the average weekly contributions putting him in a lower bracket.

This matter was discussed in the committee. The officials recognized that this would likely be the case. I point out that those who have to draw unemployment insurance benefits are those who are irregularly employed, rather than those who are regularly employed. That is so in the very nature of things. I therefore suggest that as a result many people will find they are not going to get the full amounts set out either in column 2 or column 3 of this clause because of the lesser amounts paid in during the weeks they were irregularly employed. Some of us wish the commission or the government would yet find some way in which to provide for the benefit to be related to the person's weekly rate of income rather than to the actual amount received in short-time periods.

Mr. Herridge: In order to save the time of the committee, Mr. Chairman, I simply want to express my complete support of the remarks made on this clause by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre in the industrial relations committee, and in the committee of the whole at the present time.

Clause agreed to.

On clause 48—*Maximum benefits.*

Mr. Gregg: If hon. members will refer to *Votes and Proceedings* of June 8, page 691, they will find that the standing committee, on this item—which of course involves the expenditure of public money—rather than making an amendment, made it a recommendation. Their recommendation is as follows:

Your committee further recommends that the government consider the advisability of increasing the period of maximum benefits beyond the 30 weeks provided in the bill;

Strong representations were made to the standing committee by organized labour and by members of the committee itself, and there