

mobility in the construction industry? The minister well knows that mobility within the construction industry is a necessary prerequisite for maintaining a viable industrial sector.

People have to be encouraged to go to those areas where construction is taking place. A number of basic concerns were expressed in the report. I will run through them quickly. On the basis of presentations made to the task force by representatives of labour, management and government, it concluded the following major factors affect the movement of construction workers: room, board and travel allowance, the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission mobility program, taxation and equities, industry practices, the Quebec construction industry labour relations act, a lack of information and the demand for and supply of labour, reciprocity and portability of health, welfare and pension plans, licensing and certification of trades and apprenticeship training.

I appreciate that the minister and the federal government do not have jurisdiction over all these areas. However, the minister and the government do have jurisdiction over certain of them or at least a shared responsibility. I am interested in knowing what, if anything, the minister intends to do to respond in a positive way to the many worth-while recommendations contained in this extremely well written, well thought out document which was presented more than two years ago to this government and the provincial governments.

This task force was set up as a result of a decision made by the first ministers in 1978. Its participants are representative of the various sectors within the construction industry. They have recommended such things as room, board and travel allowances in order to encourage people who must out of necessity be away from home, to allow them to live reasonably well while away and still maintain their family and their home where they live.

It also spoke about apprenticeship training and the need for some uniformity across the country. It is suggested the federal government might consider in one way or another influencing the provinces, where it clearly falls within provincial jurisdiction, to develop uniformity across the country in apprenticeship training and, therefore, high mobility.

There is so much more in the report. I cannot go through it all in the few minutes allowed to me. I would very much like the minister to devote a moment or two to that subject.

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When doing so, he might consider another problem which directly relates to the construction industry and which is also part of the unemployment insurance scheme. In order to qualify for an insurable week under the unemployment insurance program, a person must have 20 hours of work with one employer. It is not inconceivable, in fact it is quite frequently the case, that people in construction do not get 20 consecutive, or for that matter 20 hours with one employer during a one-week period. Because they do not, they could move from one employer in the morning to another in the afternoon, but they might not have those 20 hours with one employer. Therefore, though they have completed 40 hours of work in a week,

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it is not considered to be an insurable week under the act. This strikes me as being unfair.

Will the minister consider whether or not there might be justification to base the payment and the determination of payment on individual industry sectors within the construction industry? From time to time there is work in one trade but there is no work in another. Yet, when calculations are made they are made on the basis of the industry as a whole and this can, and does, work a hardship on some workers.

I should like to turn from that to a marginally related matter. On a number of occasions I have raised the problems presently confronting people within the auto industry who are not able to find employment but who are anticipating returning to the auto industry if, as and when it recovers. After checking it through, I find that although the minister did respond some months ago to the problems of Windsor, with its 20,000 auto workers and related industry employees unemployed, he did so by reducing the numbers of weeks a person must have worked in order to requalify. As I understand it, unfortunately the calculation is based on StatsCan evidence and when StatsCan evidence is gathered it is on the basis of a questionnaire. The people who were unemployed and who were working with the local manpower and unemployment offices in the Windsor area were informed when they discussed their dilemma with those local offices, that they need not go through the motions of looking for work in Windsor at that point simply because there was no work available. It made no sense to come in with trumped up lists of places they had been when everyone knew there were no jobs anyway. They were told not to go through that process. When StatsCan asked them if they were actively looking for work, they said no. That, as I understand it, reflected on the decisions of the Unemployment Insurance Commission and, therefore, the reduced number of weeks that had to be met for compliance was eliminated and they went back to the normal waiting period. I would like the minister to consider this and to indicate whether it is, in fact, an accurate reflection of what happened and, if it is, to find a new method of calculating. The infirm Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce told me the other night—I am sorry he has broken his knee; I will go no further—that the difficulty is that the area within which Windsor workers are considered for unemployment insurance benefits includes Sarnia and other communities. Although conditions have improved in some of the outlying parts of that particular geographical area, they have certainly not yet improved substantially in Windsor. Can the minister tell us whether or not he is considering making an adjustment to what we might call the catchment area, I suppose, for unemployment insurance calculations as they apply to auto workers and other people who are now unemployed as a result of the downturn in the auto industry in the Windsor area in particular? There should be an effort to try to guarantee that when the industry makes its recovery, as we all hope it will, there will then be in that area skilled and trained people within that industry still available for work and that the people will not have been disintitiled as a result of bureaucratic mix-up, or as a result of an unfair