

*Unemployment Insurance*

first job. It is absolutely ludicrous. It is stupid. What does the Government think Canadians are that they will not see through this?

I want to make crystal clear again to those who are watching, that while I have no problem with paying people their unemployment insurance based on what one part of this Bill is proposing, we cannot, in principle, accept that two-thirds of employees have to get a second job before they can collect. We cannot accept that because that is an injustice to 50,000 pensioners who were affected by this change in 1984.

We say the Bill is unfair. In many parts of the country such as Atlantic Canada, northern Ontario, parts of Quebec, the Prairies and British Columbia, it is not easy for an older worker who takes an early retirement to get a second job. What the Government is saying is that if one happens to live in the Golden Horseshoe in Ontario, that is great, one would be able to collect unemployment insurance and receive one's pension because one has a second job. But in many regions of the country it is not easy for the older worker to get a second job, and so they would never collect.

We say this Bill is absolutely undemocratic. On November 8, 1984, the Minister of Finance consulted no one, neither the Minister nor the Unemployment Insurance Commission, and we discovered that when the commission appeared before the standing committee. Neither did he consult the Advisory Council of the Department of Employment and Immigration, nor Members of Parliament, nor those who have an interest in unemployment insurance. The Minister of Finance unilaterally, in his autocratic way, rose in this House and holus-bolus said: "Boom, you are gone, sacked. You got it". He must have been taking lessons from the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) when he said to the pensioners: "Zap, zap, you got it". What did he do? He amended—and this is the undemocratic part—an Act of Parliament by regulation. Parliament passed the Act which provided pensioners with their unemployment insurance and their pension income, but this Tory Government and this Minister amended that Act by regulation, which is an undemocratic principle. We in this House had no opportunity to debate those measures. I accuse this Government of being undemocratic, unfair and illogical. I can think of other things of which I can accuse the Government but this is a family show.

To rub salt in the wound, having amended an Act of Parliament by regulations, having taken away the pensioners UI benefits by regulation, what does the Minister do? He says: "Well, we cannot give it back to some of them by regulation. We have to do it by an Act of Parliament". So we have this mess of porridge called Bill C-50. People out there watching have to understand what a snivelling group are those sitting on the government side, although they are not so snivelling when it comes to their corporate friends, their buddies in high places.

We on this side of the House cannot support this Bill. The principle is flawed. I want people to understand as they watch this process that about one-third of those who are eligible will receive some money, but the fact is that two-thirds are going to

be denied what is rightfully theirs. They have contributed. It is like an insurance scheme. Imagine, Madam Speaker, if you had fire insurance on your house and you paid the premiums faithfully and then the house burned down? You go to the insurance company and tell them your house burned down and you are ready to collect, and they say: "Well, just a minute now. You have \$80,000 in the bank, two cars, and are earning so much in salary. Sorry, we cannot pay because you have income".

What kind of cockamammie scheme is that? What kind of a jiggery-pokery scheme is this? This is just flimflammy. It is taxation without representation, that is what it is. They have no choice but to pay the premium. Once they are working in the workforce of Canada, they have to pay, but then they will face all of these hurdles in order to collect.

● (1200)

This is a cruel Government. I want to make it clear that it is cruel, particularly with people who do not have the muscle to fight back. Across the country groups have fought against the original announcement since it was made in November, 1984. All the pension groups which have contacted me through my newsletters have indicated their opposition to Bill C-50. They are solidly together—they stand in solidarity. They have said that an injustice to one is an injustice to all. While there are some who are anxious to receive what is rightfully theirs under this Bill, there are far too many who will be denied and who will continue to be denied what is rightfully theirs in terms of unemployment insurance.

The compromise which the Government has come up with in Bill C-50 is no compromise at all. We will vote against this Bill. I want people to understand why we are voting against it. It is because in principle the Bill is flawed. It is because of that that I am now prepared to introduce an amendment.

I move:

That the motion be amended by striking out all the words after the word "that" and substituting the following:

"the House refuse to continue the studying of this Bill which:

- (a) contradicts the principle that pension income is earned income and that pension is considered earnings for unemployment insurance purposes; and
- (b) creates discrimination in an essential service."

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** The Chair has listened carefully to the amendment moved by the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez). The Chair realizes that the amendment is not at all related to the amendment previously moved by the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East (Mr. Allmand). Hence, at this time, the Chair cannot receive the amendment from the Hon. Member. Of course, it could be moved once we have disposed of the amendment which is already before the House.

**Mr. Rodriguez:** Madam Speaker, just for clarification, after we have disposed of the amendment that is before the House, will the Chair then entertain my amendment?