

Supply

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): A five-minute question and comment period. The hon. member for Parkdale—High Park.

[*English*]

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, I compliment the hon. member for Laval—Est, not for his contribution to this debate, but for being a good employer if he practised what he told us he practised. That is an employer.

The complaint I am getting from the chairman of metropolitan Toronto, Mr. Alan Tonks, is that the city is being killed economically by having to pick up the welfare costs, whether it is for the refugees that are coming or whether it is for people who are caught between jobs and unemployment. I have heard about that field process here and I heard about the just cause and not just causes. There will be people who either because of a waiting period or because they are not eligible have to live off something. They cannot starve to death in Canada.

In the Montreal area, just as in the Toronto area, I am sure these people will have to go on social assistance. I would like to hear from the hon. member whether the cities in Quebec are making the same complaint, that the federal government has abandoned its responsibility and is trying to shift the burden on to the local municipalities while at the same time it is looking very good because it says: "Look at what an efficient country we are running".

Mr. Della Noce: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague. I must tell him that the same exists in all the cities in Quebec. In some places it is worse for many other reasons. I do not know if they have the same demonstrations with the unions that took over the issue.

"They are going to control" said the people who came into my office this morning. They have orders to stay there. I said, who do you represent? Are you unemployed? I was told: "I represent everybody who works in the union from your riding". They came from 50 miles north of my riding, which was a little bit surprising.

They said what about the people who do not work and that we should take care of? They are not the workers. The workers are responsible because they pay the invoice. It is the same question which I ask people in the city. Of course the city mayor complains on many issues not only on this issue. They always need more. They have their problems too.

We have to be careful because this UI system is not an insurance which will solve all the problems. We collect \$15 billion and we need \$22 billion. Where will we get the money? The deficit we can always play with, but that is not our intention. To pick up the tab from the city, of course there is some, but this is not due to what the government is going to do. Before we had people who were starving on the 17 or 12 weeks period. Are we now trying to tell the people that everybody who leaves their job will be penalized? Wrong.

This morning in our caucus meeting, without giving all the details because we do not know what could be changed, I heard a lot of good news. The benefit of the doubt is never given to the employer. It is given to the second party which is the employee. If the employer says that the employee went out because of misconduct and the employee says it is because the employer changed his hours or because of other reasons, I can guarantee my hon. colleague that I will fight for this person and he will not be penalized, he will not be starving. On the other hand I can say I am fed up with waking up at 5 a.m. A lot of my people and a lot of employers have said they want to pay for the people who really need it. They say it is 1 per cent. It might be a little bit more. It does not matter how much it is, it is still too much. My employers said they pay \$4.20. To solve the problem what would it cost? I said \$8 and they do not like it, "We are going to freeze that there and we have to pick it up".

• (1900)

In the city it is the same problem with the employers who are fed up paying the UI unless they really need it. I am in agreement to pay UI for the people who are really starving, who need a job or they have lost their jobs and not quit their jobs voluntarily.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, to start with, I would like to respond to the unflattering comments the Liberal member for Hamilton East made about me. Usually, I do not pay attention to the criticisms coming from people who are misinformed, but today I will make an exception. It is true that I am not here to dodge criticisms coming from Liberal or other members, but I want to tell Canadians that I forgive the hon. member for Hamilton East for what she said. Forgive her, Lord, and let your light shine on her so she mends her ways. I consider the incident closed.