

Supply

members from all parties. I must say that members of all three parties approached their task eagerly and honestly. I think we made some very concrete recommendations, not all of which have been adopted at this point by the government, but many have.

I want to refer to the national training bill introduced in this House last Friday. I see my time is quickly slipping by, but I want to highlight some aspects of that bill. The bill will go a long way to addressing those occupations which are at the present time somewhat of a paradox. Literally we have thousands and thousands of people unemployed, while at the same time many jobs are going unfilled. That in itself is a crime. The national training bill will allow higher income support rates to encourage laid-off apprentices to continue with their trades. It will authorize the waiving of the present requirement that adults must be out of school for a period of 12 months, allowing them to return to secondary institutions immediately. It will permit workers to be trained in higher level skills beyond the present 52-week period. Unfortunately, because a person can receive support for a period of only 52 weeks, many of our bright young people are taking short courses instead of going on to study higher technology or computer sciences. There is a need for people with that knowledge and there are jobs in those sectors going unfilled at this time.

Unfortunately, and sadly, because I had much to say which I thought would contribute to this debate, I must call it six o'clock.

Mr. Taylor: You have not said anything yet.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): It being six o'clock, I do now leave the chair until eight o'clock this evening.

At 6 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have an opportunity this evening to discuss the motion before the House which deals with unemployment, particularly unemployment among young Canadians. There is an obvious need to discuss what I view to be one of the most serious problems facing our country today. Statistics certainly point to that need, and those figures in and by themselves are nothing short of a national disgrace. Last month there were some 1,233,000 persons, or 9.6 per cent of the work force, registered as being unemployed. Nearly half that number, 508,000, were between the ages of 15 and 24. On a seasonally adjusted basis unemployment among young Canadians was 16.6 per cent. The unadjusted unemployment figure increases that figure to some 18 per cent. If the hidden unemployed—those who are unemployed but who are no longer registered as looking for work—are taken into account, that figure for youth unemployment jumps to some 25.1 per cent of the youth unemployed, which means that there are some 777,000 young people between the ages of 15 and 24 who are unemployed. On top of that there will be additional thousands of summer students who will be

looking for employment over the next several months in preparation for returning to schools and universities in the fall.

• (2010)

Those and similar statistics have been known and available not only to government but also to government agencies for several years now, and I rather suspect that as these monthly unemployment figures are released, many Canadians are becoming numb at the enormous size of these figures. The reason for this is not that Canadians have been entirely shocked at the figures, as the trends have been fairly steady and fairly persistent; nor do I think people generally have stopped caring about unemployment; it is simply that statistics in these magnitudes are difficult for the average person to comprehend.

The other possible reason is that numbers and statistics fail to reflect the human element and the untold misery unemployment creates for individuals and their families. There is a report today in the *Toronto Star* of interviews with a number of individuals who have recently become unemployed. The report discusses the particular problems those individuals face. One of those individuals is a young chap aged 29 who is unemployed and struggling to meet a \$400 monthly mortgage payment. According to the *Star*, he is mad at the crowds, the red tape and the complete bureaucracy which stand between him and the \$189 a week he knows he has coming in unemployment insurance benefits. They call it Canada Employment, but these days, with 1.2 million out of work, even the name is a cruel joke that mocks the unemployed. In his words: "Picture yourself with a family, two kids, the mortgage overdue, and no money for five weeks". This individual took home some \$400 a week before he was laid off, and then he enrolled in a federally-sponsored welding course. It was at that point that he made a mistake. He dropped out of the course to take two weeks' temporary work because his government cheques were not coming in. He says he had bills to pay but that "They don't seem to know what that means; they said being broke was no excuse for dropping out". After repeated visits to unemployment insurance offices to straighten out his claim this individual says he is sick and tired of being harassed by the system his tax dollars and premiums pay for. There are countless stories like that all over this country, and some of them are recorded in today's *Star*.

In terms of young people, unemployment statistics do not reflect those who have never even had the opportunity of entering the work force. They do not reflect the total frustration of those who are seeking employment for the first time and are rejected at every turn. The statistics even show that many of those kids give up in total frustration because there simply are no jobs. In their search for jobs they not only become frustrated but they also become totally demoralized after being rejected and rejected and rejected for one reason or another, the main one being that there are no jobs to be found. The second reason is that before employers are willing to hire any of these individuals they demand and insist that they have