

*Government Orders*

Those people are not only facing the chop of some \$70 or \$80 a month but very restrictive, tough measures. If you quit your job without just cause you are gone.

There are all kinds of reasons why people quit their jobs that are justified. They pay a very severe penalty already, some 12 weeks' waiting and so on.

• (1830)

I was just looking at the figures of the number of people who quit their jobs. In September 1988, at the height of the economic cycle, more than 31,000 Canadians quit their jobs. In September 1990 this number had fallen to 26,000 and in September 1992 only 16,700 had quit their jobs.

We are talking about a work force of 11 million or 12 million people. There are all kinds of family situations, health problems or work activity problems that cause people to quit, and it does not seem to be a very large number of people. Yet it puts employers in an incredibly strong position. They are able to say to individuals: "Buddy, maybe I am working the butt off you, but if you do not like it, if you quit the job you are not going to get any UI".

There must be a certain civility about how we operate the unemployment insurance program. It is the largest program in the country, \$22 billion. This could surely be operated without putting the hammer in the hands of the employer. There must be a balance so that if the individual quits his job, whether it is because of situations at home, situations in the work place or whatever, then he pays a penalty. However, under this arrangement all the power is given to the employer, and that is the unfair part of Bill C-113.

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity to say a few words for the record on this particular piece of legislation.

First, I want to address the over-all situation. The government is continuing to do what it has been doing on a number of other issues, and that is trying to fool Canadians.

It is doing two snow jobs here, trying to fool two groups of people, Canadians generally and the workers. I will explain that to the House.

During the constitutional crisis the government decided to try to frighten people into saying yes. During the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement debate it used the same kind of tactic. It has not learned a lesson from those experiences.

What is it doing now? Why do I say that it is doing a snow job on Canadians? I say so because it is preying on the fears of Canadians that some people are taking advantage of the current system, and it is true, but they are very, very few in number. It is preying on the sense of fairness that Canadians have, because Canadians do not want people to take advantage of the system. That is what the government is doing.

It is trying to pretend that there are scads of people who are really taking advantage of the situation and costing Canadians millions of dollars of their hard earned money, but we know that is not true.

We also know, by virtue of this bill, that this government has not learned anything during the last eight plus years that it has been in power.

[*Translation*]

It is unfortunate, Mr. Speaker. It is very, very unfortunate. This approach or tactic, which was used in other circumstances, is meant to exploit the fears and feelings of Canadians. It will not work.

[*English*]

I will explain why it will not work. Let us look at what some people have said. Alain Dubuc of *La Presse*, in an editorial on January 25, commented on this piece of legislation and damned it because it does not take into account any grey areas. He said: "The bill in its present form is inhuman".

People will argue that it has been changed, but it has not been changed sufficiently so that it now is considered acceptable. Let it be clear that we on this side of the House want those who do not want to work to have to face the music. We do not want to go easy on them. We want them to contribute their fair share to society but we do not believe that this is the way to do it.

• (1835)

Let me quote another individual. Claude Forget, the head of the study, questions the Tory measures, calling them: "a political miscalculation and economically just an empty gesture—a waste of time and political credibility". That is what Mr. Forget has said about this bill. This is not Ron Duhamel, member of Parliament for St. Boniface. This is not the Liberal Party. This is what Mr. Forget has said: "a political miscalculation and economically just an empty gesture—a waste of time and political credibility". Not even the Conservative's ideological soulmates are with them on these measures.