

*Unemployment Insurance Act*

ure was debated, the many arguments that we should not consider family income whatsoever. I wonder how they can now sit in their seats and hear other Conservative members talking about the two-tier system under which families have to be considered. I wonder how they can do that without getting up and objecting. I saw the hon. member for Egmont trying to get the floor so I assume that he is going to get up and argue in favour of the two-tier system, in order to continue being the hypocrite he has been in this House for the last few years.

I should like to take a look at the Tory party's plan for the two-tier system because they say they are going to help the ordinary people of this country. I am very fond of the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) and St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie), partly because I am very fond of Newfoundland and consider these two as members of an endangered species. I saw what happened to the Tory support in Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe where the Tory party dropped from winning a seat just a few years ago to running a dismal third.

Let me take a look at what that two-tier system really means, and there is no better place to see what will happen than in the province of Newfoundland, because in Newfoundland we have high unemployment and the highest cost of living in the country. We have more poor people in that province than in any other part of our country, and we should look at what would happen there under the Tory plan.

When we talk about that Tory two-tier system what really is it going to mean? We all know presently that unemployment insurance payments are 66 $\frac{2}{3}$  per cent of average insurable weekly earnings. The government proposes to reduce that to 60 per cent. What the Tory party wants to do is leave this at 66 $\frac{2}{3}$  per cent, but only for those people with dependants, not for the poor person who is single and does not have dependants. Let me remind the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands that 90 per cent of women who draw unemployment insurance do not have dependants. She wants to make sure that they draw only 50 per cent of the average insurable weekly earnings.

Let us look at an example of the Conservative party plan in order to see what that party really wants in Canada. Today a fish plant worker in the province of Newfoundland who is working for the minimum wage in that province of \$2.50 an hour, works an average of 40 hours a week, earning \$100. What does the Conservative party propose for Christmas? What does that Santa Claus clown Crosbie and the other people in the Conservative party propose? A fish plant worker receiving \$2.50 an hour works for some 40 hours a week and receives \$100. If that worker is laid off, under the Conservative plan she or he will receive \$50 a week. I do not know who in the devil in this country could buy their food, pay for their shelter, and pay their taxes, on \$50 a week. I do not know how the devil they could do it.

The Conservative party is suggesting that someone in this country can live on \$2,600 a year. That is what \$50 a week times 52 weeks works out to, and that is what the Conservative party is suggesting, those so-called friends of the ordinary

[Mr. Nystrom.]

man. I suggest that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) is the \$50 Santa Claus of the poor people of this country.

We should call their plan what it is, and that is precisely what the Conservative party is advocating, 50 bucks a week for the people of this country who are drawing unemployment insurance benefits. The so-called red Tories, like the hon. member for Egmont and the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands, get up and chastise the government, and so they should, for cutting back on unemployment insurance benefits, yet the plan they are advocating for their constituents is a hell of a lot worse than the plan of hon. members across the way.

Let us consider the part-time worker, the waitress in Newfoundland. The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands pretends to defend the women in the work force of this country. The waitress who is working 20 hours a week for the minimum \$2.50 an hour receives some \$50 a week. Her unemployment insurance under the Conservative plan would be \$25 a week. That is what the Conservative plan is for the part-time workers of this country. That is what is offered by that Santa Claus from Rocky Mountain. That Santa Claus must be stopped dead in his tracks, as I am sure he would be if the people of this country were aware of what he really stands for.

I got a real education in what the Conservative party meant during our campaign in Saskatchewan just a few months ago when I saw a guy named Dick Collver trying to get elected. When we told the people of Saskatchewan the facts, the Conservative party in that province was smashed and turned back decisively for the first time in the last number of years.

It is about time we told the people of this country the facts about those people who sit to our right. They suggest that the people of this country can live on \$2,600 a year. That is what they are saying: 50 bucks a week. That's what the Leader of the Opposition is saying, that great big Santa Claus, that hypocrite who comes into this House and says 50 bucks a week is what the people of this country can live on. I sure as hell can't do it and I am damned sure the Leader of the Opposition can't do it either. If he thinks otherwise, I would like to see him get up in this House and tell us how the ordinary person in this country can live on some 50 bucks a week.

Let us look at the two-tier system.

**An hon. Member:** Let's debate the motion.

**Mr. Nystrom:** Let us debate the Tory motion. We are not getting to that motion because they are afraid to get to it. This motion hits women, and 95 per cent of the women drawing unemployment insurance do not have dependants. They will be getting only 50 per cent of the weekly insurance earnings. The Tories want to hit women, and they want to hit them hard. As I said, they are hitting the waitress in Newfoundland who is getting some 50 bucks a week. That is what is proposed by this Santa Clause from Rocky Mountain. That is what the Conservative party is offering the people of this country. We know that the women in this country are the last people to be hired and the first to be fired. They are one of the targets of the