

*Government Orders*

father laid off his son or brother-in-law or sister-in-law, they then went to apply for unemployment insurance only to find their case had to be passed on to National Revenue for a special ruling to make sure that they were at arm's length from the business.

The Minister of Employment and Immigration says: "That is right". I just wish that minister had been standing in my office when I had some of these people there making representations to me when they had not had a pay cheque for eight or nine weeks and that included Christmas. The government should be ashamed of itself for imposing that kind of restriction on people.

One person had worked for 20 years and had never claimed unemployment insurance. When he went into the office to apply, he ran into this great unemployment insurance rejuvenation bill that was supposed to be such a great boost to him only to find that he had to go through Christmas and New Years and nine weeks without a pay cheque.

There were so many calls over this that the department finally started getting it sorted out. The fact remains it was mismanagement of the legislation. Neither the department of employment nor was the Department of National Revenue was ready for it. Yet we heard screams in the House day after day about how terrible it was that this legislation was being held up. There are many people out there who wish today that it was still being held up.

I have obviously got my message through to the minister today, and I am glad, because many people have suffered through her trying to straighten out her department's relationship with National Revenue and to get the system working. It was not they who straightened it out, it was all those who had complaints and who were having their livelihood taken away from them or denied them.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue of national unity in Canada, which has so much to do with the future direction of our country, in fact almost everything to do with it, I want to share with everyone a very moving experience I had yesterday.

There is a little humorous incident I would like to relate to everybody. While we were in the VIP lounge at Uplands yesterday with the Governor General, the Prime Minister, the Minister of National Defence, senior military personnel, policy people, and several others, a colonel stepped out and in his usual brisk and efficient manner said that they were going to divide the group into two parties. He said: "We are going to have the red party and we are going to have the blue party". At that stage, the Prime Minister spoke up and said: "Len Hopkins is going to be very lonely out there, we will have to give him a podium all by himself".

The irony of the whole matter is that the Prime Minister ended up in the red party and I was in the blue party. Can you imagine a situation like that for parliamentary unity? There are some great sacrifices one has to make from time to time in this place.

The other thing I want to really zero in on here is the tremendous welcome home for the first field hospital group. They were so glad to hit Canadian soil. You have to witness it to realize what an impact it really has on people. One young man said to me: "Len, I just feel like getting down and kissing the ground". A young nurse said: "You know, in this country we say we live in the greatest country of the world. But you never witness it until you have gone abroad, up to your ankles in mud, unhealthy conditions, see the economy in other certain parts of the world, see the difficulties that people face. You come home and you thank God for your nation".

Mr. Speaker, I am sure you and every member of this House, and all Canadians, will agree that these people are great ambassadors at home for the work they do, but they are fantastic ambassadors when sent abroad. They have done a super job for us.

It presented a real challenge to me yesterday to talk to these people who had gone outside the country, and who had performed their duties so well for Canada, and who delivered the good Canadian message to foreign groups. Here we are at home, in this great nation they love so much, and we have issues here that could split the country wide open.

If there is anything that we, as Canadians, must take from this great experience, it is that we should back off a bit. We should take a look at ourselves in a mirror—and I do not mean just some, I mean everybody—and ask ourselves where we are coming from. Here we do in fact have everything that any human being would want on the face of this earth. God has blessed us with everything that any human being would really want.