

Government Orders

Madam Speaker, you are signalling that my speaking time is up, but just allow me to add this: Bill C-113 is of necessity based on fairness, job creation and incentive for our small and medium-sized businesses.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie): Madam Speaker, it must be pointed out to the hon. member that many people oppose this bill, not only labour organizations, but also the Quebec Bar Association and the Conseil du patronat, and that goes for both versions of the legislation.

I would like to tell the member what the Quebec bar said: "The total disqualification of a claimant's right to benefit in all cases of unjustified voluntary departure as defined in the legislation, or of dismissal for misconduct would be unrealistic, given the conflicts which occur in labour relations". This opinion is from people who cannot really be suspected of being steadfast allies of the labour unions. I am referring to the Quebec bar and the Conseil du patronat.

I should also tell the hon. member that there have been suggestions. For example, if the government had said that from now on, to be eligible for UI benefits, any claimant would have to take a vocational training course, I think that all of us in this House would have applauded and supported such a reform of the unemployment insurance system. Not only is it not the case, but to be eligible for occupational training one must receive either unemployment insurance or welfare. Those who will be excluded under this reform will get neither.

There are people who will receive no vocational training and this is the main problem with employment, because Canada ranks about 22nd among the 24 members of the OECD in terms of occupational training.

I want to mention two specific cases to the hon. member and then I would like him to comment. Let us consider the case of cheaters. There are cheaters and one of the most frequent forms of cheating is in small business. Small businesses, in collusion with their employees, increase the employees' salaries and then lay them off for lack of work. We are not talking about voluntary departure or misconduct. Then, these people continue to work for the same employer while receiving UI benefits.

• (1655)

The bill does not in any way deal with this type of fraud which is one of the most frequent. A second example—

Madam Deputy Speaker: I would like to remind the hon. member that he was not recognized for debate but for questions and comments, and he has already used up three minutes. I would appreciate it if he finished what he has to say.

After four years the hon. member also ought to know that he should take his seat when the Speaker rises. Thank you.

I strongly suggest that the hon. member finish his comment, give the hon. member who had the floor a chance to respond and let the Chair recognize someone else as well during this 10 minute period.

Mr. Duceppe: I will finish my second question. Take the example of an employee who has been with CIP for 25 years, becomes unemployed and happens to find a job in a small business. After three days, he feels the terms are unacceptable, leaves his job and goes to the unemployment insurance office and is told he is no longer eligible for benefits. Does the hon. member think this person will take a chance finding a job or does he think that person will say that he is not taking any chances, and will take his benefits? These are people who will no longer make the effort.

Mr. Robitaille: Madam Speaker, I will not thank the hon. member for his comments, because it is really incredible when you hear all the misinformation the hon. member has just given here in the House. He just said that the Conseil du patronat and the Quebec Bar Association were opposed to the bill. That is false. The Conseil du patronat expressed reservations when we tabled Bill C-105. I suggest the hon. member have another talk with Mr. Dufour. He would realize that Mr. Dufour, who is the president of the Conseil du patronat, has now expressed his support for Bill C-113, thus acknowledging that we made the necessary amendments in response to his concerns.

As for occupational training, it is targeted to those who are on unemployment insurance. Often, if you want to help these people get back into the labour market quickly, training requirements may be different so they may need extra training. There are thousands of people and as I said in my speech earlier today, over one million