

Labour Crisis in Aircraft Industry

of the personal circumstances of people involved in this crisis. One man came out from England with his two children aged 12 and 14. He has a house on which he pays \$90 a month in respect of the first mortgage and \$35 in respect of the second mortgage. He has a car on which he pays \$100 a month. His gas bill amounts to \$22 a month, his telephone bill \$5 a month and his light bill \$8 a month. How can he possibly prevent personal tragedy by drawing unemployment insurance?

An hon. Member: He will simply have to lose his car.

Mr. Hellyer: An hon. gentleman has just commented that he will just lose his car.

Mr. Benidickson: And his house.

Mr. Habel: He will lose everything.

Mr. Hellyer: He will indeed lose everything, and the hon. gentleman who first interjected made it sound a matter of no account. It is not just a matter of 300 or 400 or even 12,000 or 14,000 families who are affected. That is just the beginning. The effects have not yet spread out to the complex of subsidiary industry the probable result of which will be that another 10,000 to 20,000 families will be directly involved.

Another instance drawn to my attention concerns a chap who came from England some years ago and who has been out of work for some three weeks because of lack of seniority. He moved to Toronto from the maritimes and sold for \$8,000 a house which cost him \$13,500. After he was laid off he went to the bank to find out about his housing mortgage. He was referred to the bank's head office and was given until March 15 next to make a payment.

Another man told me that he did not know now which way to turn. He was practically born and raised in the aircraft industry and had lived and talked it all his life. It was the only thing he knew and understood. He is an airplane man from start to finish and now he has no place to go unless perhaps to the United States, he added. One man is in such a precarious financial position that he told me in all sincerity he must of necessity take his daughter out of high school to cut down on expenses. This is an alarming state of affairs. Another man has a son in law who recently met with a very serious accident. The son in law had his brain injured and is unable to work. This man now has as dependants his wife and daughter, his son in law and two grandchildren. He has no money. He is out of work and has no income. Where does he go from here?

These stories could be repeated time and time again, Mr. Speaker, because they are

just representative of the thousands of cases which are real and not just statistics. It reminds us of the statement the Prime Minister made not long ago, to the effect that while he was Prime Minister no person would suffer unduly because of unemployment. We seriously wish that the Prime Minister would try to live up to that very important undertaking.

One of the aspects of this situation about which we feel most strongly, Mr. Speaker, is that of our technical and scientific personnel. If I might be permitted just a moment of personal reflection, it is just about 19 years ago now when I first started out to try to learn something about the aircraft industry. At that time there was no course in aeronautical engineering in this country. There was no aircraft industry; there was no accumulation of aircraft skills, and for that reason I have followed the course of development of the industry through those years with more than casual interest. As a result perhaps I feel more keenly the present situation, because I can appreciate the almost colossal magnitude of the build-up and the improvement which have taken place in our capacity during those years. I do not think people who are not acquainted with some of the industrial and engineering aspects of the industry can appreciate as well the magnitude of this great Canadian accomplishment. It is for this reason that we urge the government immediately to consider some proposal which will salvage the situation and stop what inevitably will be a mass exodus of our most skilled and most trained people from this country.

The other night I cited the electronics industry as just an example of what will likely happen here. Last year the government cancelled the electronic requirement for this aircraft, and we saw what happened there. At once the skilled people began to leave us. I think we should commend the government on having taken some action to hold here the nucleus of the personnel under a plan which they put into effect for the winter months, but we are told now that that plan, which expires in March, has not yet been renewed. Of course it is perhaps just a temporary thing anyway.

These people cannot continue to live in a state of uncertainty. It is an awful feeling to live from week to week and month to month not knowing when your employment is going to terminate. You cannot blame young people, young scientists, for refusing to continue to live under those conditions and for making plans and accepting positions elsewhere. I saw several people over the week end who said, "This is the final blow. We have been