

Unemployment Insurance Act, 1971 (No. 2)

cent increase. That is one of the major reasons for our difficulties, because money is auctioned. The government borrows 25 per cent of what it spends, goes out into that auction market and competes against everyone in this chamber, everyone in our gallery and everyone watching television who wants to borrow money. It drives up the cost of that money. It drives up interest rates because its borrowing needs are so high. When it does that, it causes the small businesses in this country to collapse.

I would like to refer to interest rates. Farmers cannot afford the interest rates and they have no choice but to lay off their employees, to voluntarily liquidate or to go into bankruptcy, and the jobs are gone. The need for help for those important, unfortunate victims increases. So the costs go up and the jobs go down. That has been the prescription in this country for 14 years.

I would like to conclude by drawing the attention of the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy) to the *Hansard* of June 26, 1980, almost two years ago. I would like to remind hon. members of the New Democratic Party that that was the last evening on which we considered an employer tax credit bill. Hon. members in our party fought the government and the New Democratic Party in this chamber for eight days. We said that unemployment would get worse and the economy would collapse. The cheapest and best way to create jobs in this country is through employer tax credit programs, some kind of wage subsidy program, because that would help people, especially young people, to get and keep jobs. Instead of costing an employer \$260 a week, it would cost about \$65 a week. For one quarter of the the same dollar, four times as many jobs could be created. One other impact would be to reduce the cost and the production of those goods. They would be cheaper to make, inflation would be kept down and jobs would be created.

On June 26, 1980, I moved an amendment which would have extended that program for an additional two years. It would have been in place today. There would have been more jobs in the Canadian economy.

Mr. Kristiansen: Bail out big business!

Mr. Hawkes: The hon. members of the "Liberal Party West", the New Democratic Party, said no to that amendment. The Minister of Employment and Immigration said no to that amendment. Two years later, we are standing here with a major problem which must be solved. Common sense must begin to prevail. In the inner workings of the Liberal cabinet, it is crystal clear there are people charged with the responsibility to help people. The Minister of Employment and Immigration, the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss Bégin), and the minister responsible for social policy, are losers in the resource game. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) and the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) are the winners in the resource game. When hon. members, through passive behaviour, allow the minister of energy to win, they are sending money and jobs out of the country to other nations. When they allow the Minister of Finance to win, they are doing the same thing. It is about time that the backbenchers on the other side stood up in caucus,

stood up in this chamber, and forced that cabinet to pay attention to those ministers who are supposed to help people, the Minister of Employment and Immigration, the Minister of National Health and Welfare, and others. You can no longer afford, in the name of common sense, to allow the minister of energy to win the resource battles. We will help the Minister of Employment and Immigration today to pass this bill, because Canadians need it. Next time, I hope he brings it in a little sooner so we can look to see if it will be even more helpful. But we need the help of the backbenchers on the other side.

The minister of energy is a minister who has caused more economic grief in this country, more of this unemployment with which we are dealing, than one can ever imagine. If you have a day and a half, read the transcripts and you will find out how and why. However, he must be replaced with somebody with common sense. That is the way to get this nation back together and get rid of the unemployment problem. Get rid of the ministers who are causing it. It cannot be done without the will of the backbenchers on the other side.

• (1550)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Francis in the chair.

On Clause 1—*Short title*

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Chairman, I did not want to interrupt because I did not want to delay the Committee of the Whole, but I have a couple of questions for the minister.

The minister will recall we had some difficulty with regard to discrimination in the administration of the Unemployment Insurance Act. For example, there was a time when women who fished with their families were discriminated against. The minister may recall the case of the squid fisherwomen. There are still elements of that, I suspect. In any event, I want to give the minister an opportunity to report to the House on what steps he has taken to close the loopholes which allow for women to be discriminated against in the application of the Unemployment Insurance Act.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to report to the hon. member that we did take actions to allow women who are spouses of fishermen who would also be eligible for fishermen's benefits to also collect those benefits. I do not have the exact details in front of me, but I will be glad to provide them to the hon. member.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Chairman, I have a question for the minister. He was out of the room making a phone call when I made the plea about Section 16 of the regulations which discriminates