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**Worker, Employer, Big Losers In Trudeau's Unemployment Insurance**

One of the major issues during the last federal election campaign was the high cost of unemployment in Canada. Certainly, the criticism of the Unemployment Insurance Commission most easily understood by the Canadian public is the exorbitant and extravagant cost — and particularly the fraudulent abuses of the plan.

It is estimated that in 1972, unemployment insurance cost the Canadian taxpayer over \$2.2 billion — representing more than 10% of the federal government's total budgetary and non-budgetary expenditures for 1972, more than four times as much as was spent by the Department of Regional Economic Expansion in 1972, and exceeding by a few million dollars, Canada's total defence budget.

The \$1.879 billion Unemployment Insurance Commission admitted paying out in unemployment benefits in 1972, exceeded by a wide margin the combined total of the previous two years. Benefits in 1971 totalled \$892 million. In 1970 they totalled \$694 million.

I had hoped that the government had tightened up and eliminated most of the abuses surrounding the unemployment insurance administration. During the last recess of Parliament, however, I was surprised to find many constituents still complained that there was a great deal of freeloading and outright fraud in dealing with the Unemployment Insurance Commission.

So far in 1973, unemployment is down slightly in Canada, yet the cost to the Nation for unemployment insurance is up. This is partly due to poor and costly administration, but it is also due to people taking advantage of a plan that was not well conceived before it was introduced. Officials now say they wish the new insurance scheme had been tested on a limited scale before being used across the country.

But the loser appears to be the taxpayer, the man who is working and the employer. UIC premiums are now to go up 40%.

Starting January 1st, take-home pay will decrease by as much as \$40 a year because the federal government is now going to collect more

money in UIC premiums from workers and employers. Next year, a \$100-a-week man will pay 40¢ a week more, while a person at \$170 a week will be taxed a further 78¢.

Originally the fund was said to be geared to a 4% unemployment rate. If unemployment rose above 4%, then the government was to pick up the difference out of tax dollars. It was then argued that a good government should be able to keep our unemployment down to 4% (or lower) of our work force. If they failed, then they should accept responsibility and pick up the difference.

Now the government has changed the rules again. With unemployment near 6%, they have raised unemployment premiums to make the fund self-sustaining, when 6% are unemployed in the country.

This appears to be accepting a 6% level of unemployment and making the persons who are working, pay for it.

Surely it is wrong to accept as inevitable, a 6% unemployment level in Canada. Australia feels it is a national disaster if their rate reaches 2%. It is especially wrong to load the government's mistaken approach to this matter on the worker and his employer, rather than to tighten up their own administration of the fund and to take steps to ensure less unemployment.

Many tell me there is little unemployment in Canada if all want to work. Time and again we hear, "I have tried to hire workers but I cannot find them."

Clearly it is time for a review of the entire question of unemployment in Canada, and the administration of the unemployment insurance fund.

Ottawa's approach in amending the old unemployment insurance system was undoubtedly well meaning, but it was ill-conceived. Now we have the two-pronged problem of getting those able to work, back to work, while ensuring that those who truly cannot find employment, get the benefit of an equitable unemployment insurance plan.

**Hill Citizens Group Organizes To Provide Planning Input**

As a follow-up to a public meeting of about 60 residents of Richmond Hill held October 10 in which they asserted their belief that there should be more citizen participation in the planning process, a meeting of 20 vocal and concerned citizens was held Thursday evening of last week, as an organizational meeting.

The original committee of Buster Vermeulen, Pat Bedford and Marylo Graham was augmented by individuals who volunteered to involve themselves in creating an effective board to help co-ordinate and inform citizens and aid and advise council in town planning.

It was agreed (on a motion by Dave Schiller and Gord MacKenzie) that the original committee should continue as interim administrative officers of the committee until the first meeting in January, at which time an election of a new slate of officers will take place. In the interim stress will be placed on soliciting wide representation on the committee.

**SESSION REPORT**  
A report was given of the original committee's appearance before council October 29 to advise council of the results of the public meeting and ask for council's formal recognition of a citizens' advisory board (reported in "The Liberal," November 1). Council suggested the group return when it had become more organized, appointed officers and had a clear statement of the specifics of its purpose and policy.

A letter was tabled from Councillor Dave Stephenson, chairman of Council's planning committee, offering cooperation.

Roster representatives at the planning committee meetings of October 31 and November 6, David Fayle and Myrtle McEwen, presented reports. Members expressed concern over particular areas where citizens' input seemed valid. It was learned that in two areas citizens are planning to give input to the planning committee. These are the Bayview Estates modular home development which has been proposed on land owned by Councillor William Corcoran and the proposal for an 11-lot development for Pemberton and Walmer Road which would necessitate changing, filling and channeling one portion of a tributary of the Don River to facilitate building of a sub-

division on flood-control land.

**PLANNING INTEREST**  
The committee agreed to be available for co-ordination and referral to relevant individuals and groups. It was also decided to look into the details and implications of Town Planner Hesse Rimon's suggestion for speeding-up the process of rezoning.

The committee agreed that representatives attending planning and council meetings should keep a careful record of the voting of all members of council on all issues.

Financing of the enterprises and administration was discussed. It was decided that at present the group will continue to operate out of the pockets of those involved, meanwhile applying to the Civic Improvement Committee for a subsidy of \$100.

**CONCERNS FOR TOWN**  
The meeting revolved around the purpose, function and effectiveness of a citizen's advisory board. Many concerns for the town were expressed and positive proposals for long-range planning. Some members voiced dissatisfaction with the present structure. Most felt an advisory board could and should operate to provide information feedback, in a consultative role and, it was hoped, to be actively involved in joint planning with council.

To achieve this, and early recognition by council, three areas of specific action stood out. First, a committee of Janet Fayle, Dave Schiller and Wentworth Dowell are to present a statement of purpose and policy. June Kirby's committee is to propose methods of representation for civic groups on an advisory board and Myrtle McEwen's committee is to organize co-ordination and delegation in specific issues.

The next meeting is planned for November 21.

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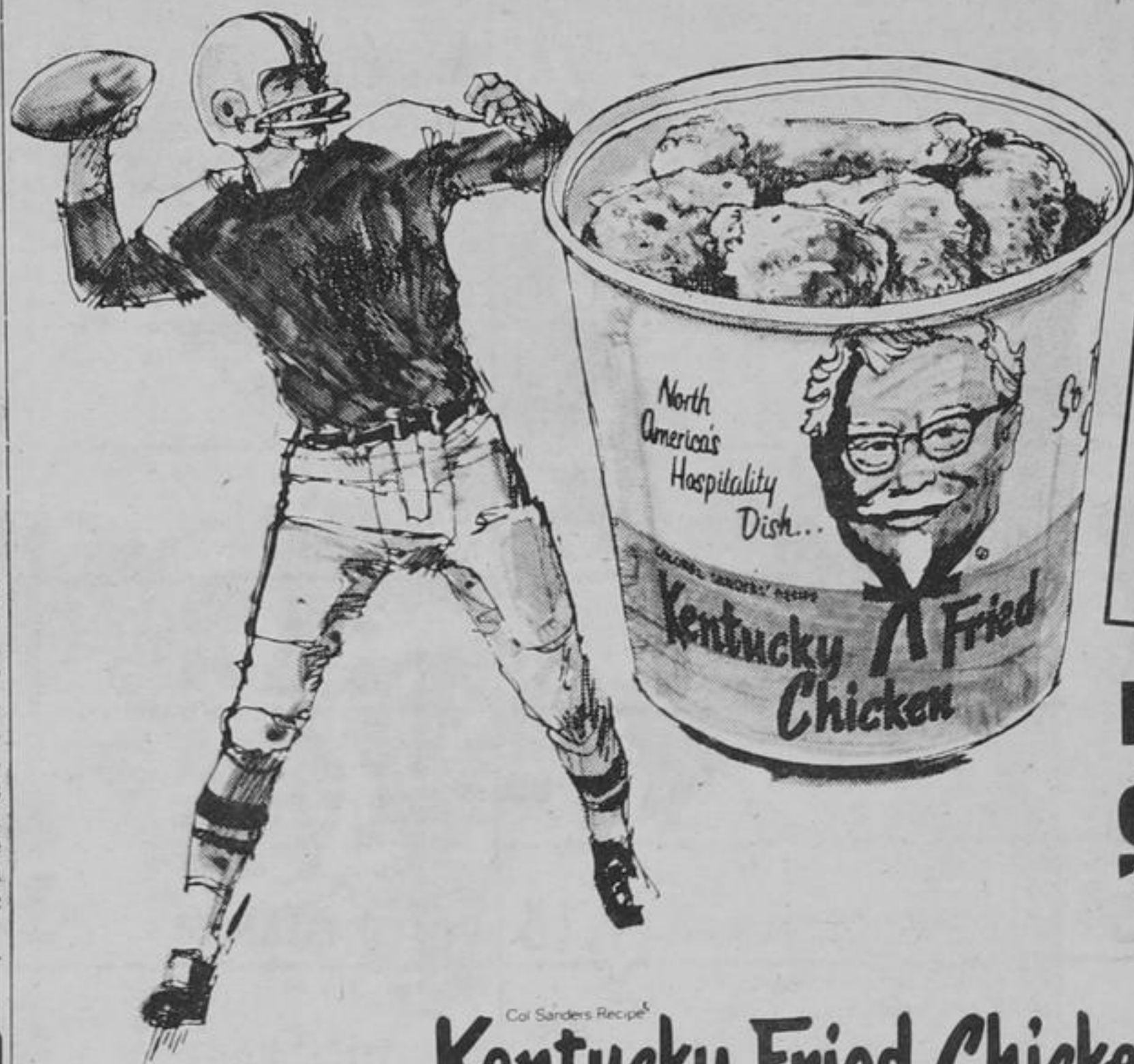
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