

in many of our communities. It is very easy for the government to reply that this is entirely a provincial or municipal matter; that they do not set these standards; that they have set no limits to what they will do. In practice those limits are already set because the municipalities are so near bankruptcy that they cannot provide anything more than they are at present doing. Under such circumstances, so long as we maintain anything like the present arrangement of the federal government giving one-third, the provincial government giving one-third and the municipality giving one-third, this means inevitable hardships on our people. If we are going to give the dole at all, we should give it on an adequate scale; we should give relief in such a fashion that our people can maintain something like a healthy and decent standard of living.

Mr. YOUNG: Can we do that?

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I am surprised that the hon. member for Weyburn should ask: Can we do it? Does he mean that the babies of this country have to suffer because we cannot finance an adequate relief scheme?

Mr. YOUNG: That is not what I mean.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Does he mean that we have not the finances to do it? We have under this legislation the power to do it. The next question comes: Have we the finances to do it? I think there are certain possibilities even now of remunerative work. If the babies have not milk, why can we not put certain people to work on farms to produce more milk? If the children have not shoes, why can we not run some of these idle factories and provide shoes for the children? If we are having large numbers of people in our population wretchedly housed, why can we not put at least a certain number of mechanics at work to rebuild some of our slum areas? That is quite possible. There are other works that will not directly supply commodities, great public works that might be undertaken which would supply work to the people and at the same time distribute greater purchasing power among the population generally. I do not think the question to-day is primarily one of producing more necessities, it is rather one of distributing more purchasing power. Under our present wage system, the only way in which we can do that is to employ people and give them wages and then they can buy back what they produce. If people were getting steady wages to-day, they would not need to come to the

municipal depots to get milk; they would buy it. If they had decent wages, they would not have to go to charitable institutions for shoes; they would buy them. If they were getting work, they would build their own homes. The trouble is that the people have not purchasing power. They cannot get money without working for it. Under these circumstances it seems to me that what should be given is work that will provide men and women in this country with wages. I do not think that any large majority of the people want to continue on charity, although if we keep on in this way very much longer we shall undoubtedly develop a class of people who will be lazy and look to the government for everything. At the present time most of our people want to work for what they get, but under our present arrangements we are not providing the work.

I think the hon. member for Weyburn (Mr. Young) in his question suggested the real answer so far as the government is concerned, that they cannot finance an adequate relief scheme. The budget however would seem to show that every cent in the form of interest that is demanded on the bonds outstanding has to be paid. The Prime Minister would tell us that that is a part of our national obligation. He would tell us that we must keep faith with the investors, and so on. Well, I should like to stand by all our obligations and keep faith with the investors, but, Mr. Speaker, I submit that we should keep faith with the people of this country who migrated here in order to make a living for themselves and their families, and we should keep faith with the sons of the pioneers who sacrificed one or two generations in order that their children and their grand-children would have a heritage in this Canada of ours. We are not keeping faith with the ordinary people of Canada. We are keeping faith, if you like, with the investors scattered all over the world, as is especially the case with those who hold railway bonds. We must keep faith with them, but what about keeping faith with our own people? There is nothing whatever said about them. We must protect our bondholders. Yes, I would say so, if we can do both, but undoubtedly if we cannot do both the welfare of the men, women and children of this country have priority over that of the bondholders.

Almost every class in the community is taking its loss. The business men have been taking their losses right along for some years now. The wage earners have been taking their loss in lower wages and in unemployment. The civil servants have been taking