

action, and to give him the fullest credit if he will bring in such a measure so long as it is practical and sound and meets the purposes for which this resolution is put forward.

Mr. HUMPHREY MITCHELL (East Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to support every word uttered by the hon. gentleman who introduced this motion. I was struck by his observation that a few years ago this was considered a radical move. I think up to four years ago the English dole was a by-word in this country; the general observation was, "We do not pay our men to be idle; we pay them to work." If your memory goes back, Mr. Speaker, you will remember the commissions that were sent from Great Britain to the United States to analyze what they considered was the solution of the golden age. They thought that they had reached the stage where they could manage men and control machines, but in their practical experience they found that their analyses were not sound. To-day in the United States we hear language almost akin to the pre-insurance age language in Great Britain.

It is quite true that many still consider legislation of this description paternalistic; in fact some go so far as to say that it is even socialistic, but in the practical problems arising out of this depression I think it has been borne out by experience elsewhere that a sound system of unemployment insurance, worked out in conformity with the problems confronting the various countries, is not a palliative but an absolute essential in the life of any industrial nation. We regret very much the oft-repeated observation that this is a palliative. Every legislative action we have ever taken might be termed a palliative, but I believe this to be an essential. If a great many of those people who advocate this form of legislation would forget the word "palliative" and call it an essential and an absolute necessity, the progress in this country would be much greater than it has been in the past. I should like to say, also, that in the midst of this depression we have forgotten some of the very real problems which existed in Canada even in the so-called prosperous years of 1928 and 1929, problems of a type which face every country of the world which has adopted a policy of dense agricultural and industrial production. We are apt to forget those things, and in the event of our getting back to days equivalent in normalcy to those of 1928, it will be necessary to have legislation of the description now before us to meet the situations which inevitably arise. I have no patience with those who say that this is

not the time to introduce a scheme of this description. In my judgment this is the psychological moment to institute such a scheme, possibly on a comparatively small scale, so that we may build up through the practical experience which we would gain in its operation. I believe that is the best policy which could be pursued.

The men and women engaged in Canadian industry are tired of the promises which have been made that this kind of legislation would be introduced. Every once in a while a statement is made by those who have the power to implement promises to the effect that consideration is being given to the introduction of legislation of this description. I remember that in the election campaign of 1930, in which I took part, my opponent had cards printed on which was the statement that he would be in a better position, if elected, to implement his promise of unemployment insurance, than I would be. I believe it is well nigh time the government brought down legislation having for its purpose the establishment of such a scheme.

I am not unmindful of the fact that the scheme has been bandied from one responsible authority to another, and that there is a suggestion that it does not come within the jurisdiction of the British North America Act or the federal government. But we should remember that at the time of the drawing up of the British North America Act, which governs the relationships between the various governments of Canada, insurance of this type was not contemplated. I do not believe the framers of the act ever dreamed that this country would have such extensive industrial development, and that it would be confronted with the unemployment problem with which we are faced to-day.

I have before me a report of the select standing committee on industrial and international relations. I find that in the year 1921, in an order in council, No. 2722, it was definitely stated that legislation of the type we are now considering comes within the province of the federal government. Recommendation (b) dealing with unemployment insurance is as follows:

The minister observes that the experience of other countries has demonstrated that a system of unemployment insurance, in order to be effective and successful, must be merely ancillary or complementary to a system of labour exchanges, the whole being adapted to the principal function of finding work for unemployed insured workmen. In this view, unemployment insurance has a pronounced federal aspect, and on the whole, the minister thinks the establishment of a system of unemployment insurance is competent to the