

Mr. Drew: I had not been previously aware of the place from which some of the words we have been hearing recently had been taken. Remember, these words were put in the mouth of the governor general at the time the economic storm had already hit this country.

Mr. Rowe: There had been several suicides, too.

Mr. Drew: But again we have the appropriate words of Bruce Hutchison: "There was a spell of blindness". All we are trying to do is take off the blinkers. All we are trying to do is use a parliamentary device which can be used by the government, if the government wants it to work; that is, to set up a committee which will really get the facts. And I submit that every member in this house should insist that we get those facts. The trouble is that the government, instead of facing the facts, is trying to make a little molehill out of a mountain. We are anxious simply to get—

Mr. Abbott: Well, I can't figure that one out.

Mr. Fulton: We will explain it later.

Mr. Drew: When, as he says, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) cannot figure it out, I am sure it is entirely consistent with his approach to public affairs in the House of Commons that he would not be able to do so.

Mr. Abbott: I think you have something there; I agree with you.

Mr. Drew: We have before us an amendment presented by the C.C.F. party. Mr. Speaker, that amendment to the amendment deals with the problem without specifically indicating the manner in which anything is to be done. The amendment moved by the hon. member for Cape Breton South (Mr. Gillis) and seconded by the hon. member for York South (Mr. Noseworthy) strikes out all the early words of the amendment moved by the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra (Mr. Green) and substitutes therefor these words: the serious and mounting unemployment situation now facing this country calls for immediate action by the federal government to prevent further economic distress.

Mr. Speaker, it is apparent from some of the statements which have been made that views as to the manner in which immediate action should be taken may differ. But so far as this amendment to the amendment is concerned, I welcome this evidence that the C.C.F. party is now supporting us in the demand for immediate action that we have been making for the last two years.

We have introduced resolution after resolution calling for immediate action to bring about increased employment by reopening

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markets in Great Britain, the commonwealth and the sterling area. The government has been extremely dilatory in that respect; and the first evidence we received that they recognize the correctness of our position was a few days ago when the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Sinclair) indicated that, in a limited measure, the government had exercised its good offices in the sale of some of the salmon pack to be disposed of this year to Great Britain.

We have been urging immediate action. Whatever doctrinaire point of view may have been expressed by any member of the C.C.F. party as to what immediate action is, we welcome any demand for such immediate action; therefore I have no hesitation in voting for the subamendment calling for immediate action.

But, Mr. Speaker, when that has been disposed of we will then have another amendment calling for an inquiry by a committee, to get the facts. I hope every member who has followed the varying figures presented to us by the government before this debate opened, and since it began, will join with us in asking that this useful mechanism of parliament be employed, so we may have a chance to find out what the facts actually are, and so short-term and long-term plans may be adopted without any delay, on the sound foundation of reality.

Mr. G. H. Castleden (Yorkton): Mr. Speaker, in speaking on a problem of this kind I think we should not forget the fact that any time we have had unemployment in Canada it has been a symptom of serious trouble in the Canadian economy. One can scarcely blame the Canadian people for being concerned when they remember the experiences of unemployment periods which they have gone through in the past, at times when Canada was not on a wartime footing and not preparing for war. And even beyond the confines of Canada, turning to the international field, those who are aware of trends in the world today know that the enemies of western democracies are not all of a military character. They would like to see Canadians unemployed.

Today, as never before, therefore, unemployment is tragic. It is like a cancer, growing and feeding upon itself. And, like cancer, it must have two things, the first of which is an early diagnosis, and the second, effective treatment. It is because we believe the government thus far has neither made the diagnosis nor applied effective treatment that we urge parliament, and particularly the government, to realize the seriousness of the situation and take effective action.