

company. If Ford is successful, then they feel they can start to try to smash the unions themselves. They are watching that giant of industry; they want the day to come when they will have a free hand. We have an example of this in Toronto where at present there is a strike at Imperial Optical. This is a smaller company, but it is rather rich having had plenty of protection through special tariff arrangements and what-not. This company refuses to deal with the union, despite the fact that over a year ago the union was certified as the bargaining agent. This company, and many others, are waiting to see what will be the outcome at Ford.

Where do we go from here? What now? I would say that these strikes show that there is something radically wrong with our labour legislation. After all, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. If our labour legislation were better, we would not have so many strikes; we could look forward to a more peaceful future for labour and management. It is because our labour legislation is inadequate that we have these troubles to-day, and it is time that the government acted, especially in the Ford strike. That strike has now lasted for two months, affecting 10,000 workers in the Ford plant, 8,000 workers in other plants, besides the many others who have been thrown out of work through the closing of the Ford plant. All these workers want a settlement of the strike. What is necessary is that the government act. That is the only solution because the company will not yield. That is very clear from the full page advertisement that appears in to-day's papers, and I suppose it appears in all the newspapers throughout the country. They are paying for newspaper advertisements with deductions from taxes, to tell the country why they will not settle the strike. The government must act to-day. A few weeks ago the government appointed controllers for the packing plants, and the order in council stated that this action was taken because the people of Europe needed food and relief. What about the people in Windsor, the thousands of families who will starve unless this strike is settled soon? A controller is the only answer, and action must come soon. The strike should not have been allowed to drag along for so long.

The Minister of Labour in his report to the house last night, speaking of the problems confronting the country in connection with reconversion, said:

I am convinced of this, that just as we built the greatest industrial machine in the life of this nation, and built it in a very short time after the outbreak of war and the fall of France, given the cooperation of the Canadian people, leadership on the part of employers'

[Mr. Rose.]

and workmen's organizations and also in agriculture, together with this government, we can make just as big a contribution to peace as we made to the recent war.

I fully agree with that statement, but the situation is somewhat different now. In war time, when the government felt that it was necessary to control a certain mine because it contained precious metals, the mine was taken over. If a certain industry was not producing as rapidly as it should, the government stepped in and set up a crown company. If the management in a certain industry was not satisfactory, the government stepped in and changed the management. There was quite a bit of necessary intervention—some might call it interference—by the government to ensure that things ran smoothly. Are the government willing to do the same thing to-day? If they are, we should have no trouble in this country. If they are not; if they are to revert to a laissez-faire attitude, leaving the vast mass of people dependent for their livelihood upon a few individuals, we are bound to have trouble. It is the government's responsibility to guarantee that we have stable conditions and not to leave it to individuals. It is the government's responsibility to help avoid strikes by guaranteeing Canadians good wages and a full measure of security, because we all recognize, and those who do not should, that this period is a carry-over of the war emergency; it is just as much an emergency as the war itself.

My party, the Labour-Progressive party, has a minimum programme which we believe the country needs at this time if we are to proceed smoothly and ensure that the people get more purchasing power and a greater security. Our minimum programme is this: (1) The universal application of the forty-hour week and an increase in wages to safeguard the take-home pay; (2) the amendment of P.C. 9384, the wage control order, to permit the raising of wage rates which are too low to provide for the minimum standard of health and decency; (3) the introduction of a national minimum wage rate of 55 cents an hour; (4) the amendment of P.C. 1003, the collective bargaining regulations, to provide for union security; (5) an increase of 50 per cent in unemployment insurance payments.

That is a constructive programme which should be implemented. These are things that need discussion at the dominion-provincial conference on reconstruction. We know that this conference is not going to sail smoothly. The *Montreal Gazette* in this morning's issue reported that Premier Drew and Premier Duplessis had met at the Ritz-Carlton hotel in Montreal. That does not augur well for