

any hope of getting out of their difficulties. I cannot go into a group of unemployed men without feeling sick at heart. Here are these men, without hope in the world, dragging out an existence through charity day after day, week after week and month after month. What prospect is there for them?

May I refer to one consideration that may not be considered very proper—to hundreds and thousands, and, in the aggregate, tens of thousands of these men being forced to live celibate lives. Any of us who are familiar with logging camps know something of the problem connected with that type of life, where great bodies of men are concerned. Those who have had anything to do with men who have been at the front know something of the problems arising out of that kind of life. Those were men living active lives, very often full of excitement, of interest. But take thousands of men who have nothing of the normal satisfactions and responsibilities of home life and can you imagine the effect of month after month and year after year of that type of existence? I do not think any hon. member who has any knowledge of the world or who has relatives who possibly are in a plight of this kind, can very well contemplate with equanimity the continuance of such a condition.

I wonder if I might mention an incident that occurred only to-day? I was in a little restaurant at noon and a man who had been an employee of this government came over to the table where I was sitting. He told me that he had been up against it for a long time, ever since he had lost his position with the government; that he had tramped the city; that he had done everything in his power to obtain work; that he had gone out as an agent and, as the depression went on, failed to make a sufficient commission to pay his expenses and that he had determined that the only thing for him to do was to leave Canada and seek, if possible, to enlist in the service of a foreign country. But he said: "The thing that worries me, that breaks my heart, is that I have four children whom I must leave behind. My wife is dead and I have four children depending upon me, I have a small pension that is about equal to keeping those children and two or three of them are in a school while one is with its grandmother." There were perhaps only two or three people in the restaurant, but it is a public place and yet the poor fellow broke down and cried at the thought of leaving his family and going to a foreign country. He would have to enlist for two or three years and leave them in Canada, but this was the only thing left

for him to do. There is no one in this house but must be touched by a case of that kind. Every one of us would be willing to give a few dollars to help an individual, but such money would be of little real service in such a case. My acquaintance was not asking me for money. He was simply telling me of his struggle. His case is typical of that of thousands throughout the country.

In making this appeal I am not talking party politics, but I would urge that there rests upon the federal government, as representing the country a responsibility to see to it that a man of this kind is not forced to leave Canada or to live a life of crime or to abandon his children; rather, we should so arrange our affairs that in some way he can be found work. Nothing less is sufficient for us; that is our responsibility to-day. That is the reason I am making this last appeal, that the government adopt a broader, more constructive policy and not merely provide for handouts to the provinces and municipalities for actual cases of distress, but undertake to provide real employment so that these men may maintain their self-respect.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Even at the risk of seeming to delay the resolution at this stage, I should like to draw to the attention of the minister one or two matters so that he may give me the information, although not necessarily to-day. I am not going to ask him for that, but I should like him to be prepared to give it at the next stage of the bill, preferably on the second reading.

Before raising those questions, may I remark that this is the second time a bill of this kind has died by the efflux of time. The original measure died on March 1, and remained dead for a solid month, the government apparently operating without any authority during that period.

Mr. GORDON: During that month the government spent no money whatever.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: True, the new bill that came into force about the first of April was made retroactive and of the same force and effect as if the old measure had never died. We can excuse that once, but why have the same thing repeated with the new bill? This is the fourth of May by the calendar. Does the minister as a lawyer think it is good legislative practice to be constantly having retroactive legislation invalidating other legislation, any more than we can absolutely help? It looks as if the government was quite satisfied with slithering along with tail-end legislation. That is what brings ridicule on this government. I have been in government