

The Address—Mr. Coldwell

how much it was, and they said \$3.75. I paid \$1.60 in the United States. These are some of the things that need investigation. That is the kind of thing you breed in a country behind a tariff wall. Therefore I can see no hope in tariffs, because they would further decrease our trade overseas. They would be walls against our income, because if overseas customers cannot buy from us we cannot sell to them.

When I hear discussions on convertibility I remind myself that convertibility can only come about when the sterling countries, we will say, can earn dollars with which to make their currency convertible. The only way they can do that is by sending to the dollar countries some of the things they produce. Until we in North America are prepared to make some arrangement so they can do that, convertibility will be a long way off.

What does the government propose to meet the mounting unemployment? Well, increases in unemployment insurance benefits. That is good; but it is like locking the stable door after the horse is gone. It is like the Acting Leader of the Opposition said, a palliative; it does not get to the root of the thing. However, we welcome it because it mitigates the suffering of certain groups of people who are unemployed and can come under the Unemployment Insurance Act. But it is a palliative, not a cure.

I notice that the Prime Minister, speaking at an apparently new Reform Club in Quebec on September 19, 1954, recognized the responsibility of the government, and that responsibility I wish to underline because the government has not assumed it. The *Montreal Gazette* report reads:

Mr. St. Laurent said the government's job is to find work for all.

With that we agree.

The government could not guarantee work that would meet the tastes of all but could guarantee enough work to be able to say that all could have jobs.

If the guarantee could be given why was it not undertaken? The Prime Minister continued:

"We have a country where there should be work for everybody and if we are not smart enough to organize the economy of the nation to provide work for everybody we are incompetent."

Note the words "organize the economy". I take it if you are going to organize you are going to plan, because you cannot organize without some kind of planning. The quotation continues:

I cannot give details but I am convinced that if my colleagues and I cannot organize economic controls in such a way that there will not be any long

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periods of loss of work for those who want to work, then throw us out and put in our place people who can do better.

I should be fair to the Prime Minister and add his next few words:

"Although," Mr. St. Laurent added, "I don't think you can find any."

That is the Prime Minister's opinion, but I think we should keep his remarks in mind when we are discussing the current unemployment situation and the necessity for organizing economic controls to ensure that everybody who wants to work shall have an opportunity of doing so. That, I think, is sound economic common sense, and I am sorry the government does not seem to possess the kind of common sense for which the Prime Minister gave it credit.

From the time that speech was made, and earlier, unemployment and distress increased in this country. What was the government doing to carry out the Prime Minister's suggestion? There are thousands of unemployed all over the country, and unemployment is particularly acute in Vancouver. When I was a child in Britain my parents, if they wanted to placate me, often gave me a very nice stick of candy called Edinburgh rock. I imagine on the same principle the government is giving Ripple Rock to the people of Vancouver, but that is about the only thing in the speech from the throne for the people of British Columbia. I imagine the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Campney) and the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Sinclair) wanted to get something in there to balance the well-deserved advances being given to the maritime provinces so they gave the people of Vancouver a piece of Ripple Rock.

I am told they have been blasting that for years. Why it should be in the speech from the throne, I do not know. Probably I have given the correct explanation. Something had to go in for the Pacific coast; Ripple Rock presented the least difficulty, and can go in again on future occasions if necessary.

Another thing we have been asked by the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Winters) is why the provinces do not do more in the building of the trans-Canada highway.

An hon. Member: Hear, hear.

Mr. Coldwell: I agree, but what is the federal government doing on the highways. All the federal government is doing for one highway is to pay 50 per cent of the cost. But in a newspaper this morning I noticed that the Eisenhower administration in the United States is appropriating an additional one hundred billion dollars for highway construction over the next ten years. Incidentally, the