

social services and other desirable expenditures, and, under the regressive system of taxation in Canada, it results to a considerable extent in the transfer of income from the poor to the well-to-do.

Again he states:

The fairest and most satisfactory of the drastic measures is the capital levy, which is practicable, fair and theoretically sound. Detailed specifications have been worked out in England, both officially and unofficially. No such calculations have been made in Canada but probably at least \$2,000,000,000 could be wiped out in this way without any serious disturbing effects on the foundations of our economic life.

So we submit that the proposal of a debt redemption levy is sound, practicable, and should now be considered by the government. We advance it not as a panacea or cure-all for our economic ills, but as presenting a safer and more practicable method of reducing the national debt than any yet proposed, within the ambit of the present economic system.

My chief concern is that the policy of the government will tend to crystallize conditions described in an editorial in the current issue of Maclean's Magazine. This editorial referring to the appointment of the national employment commission, says in part:

Neither the bill which outlines the powers and duties of the commission nor the debate over it in the house indicated that the government is proceeding on the premise that unemployment is a permanent problem and not an emergency which, though protracted, will pass away.

The depression cannot be held responsible for the basic problem of unemployment. A revival of trade may alleviate it, but cure it, no.

The truth is that Canada never has succeeded in absorbing its population.

From 1867 to 1933, 6,450,000 immigrants came into this country. Yet the total population increase at the end of that time was only 7,000,000. In sixty-five years we lost almost the equivalent to our entire natural increase during that period.

Even in our most prosperous years there wasn't work for all who wanted it. In the ten years from 1921 to 1931, 1,245,555 people left Canada. Most of them went to the United States to seek work or better themselves.

Between 1914 and 1918 the war took up the slack. Before that there was unemployment. Its effects were not so obvious because those were the days of free land. Men would work for established farmers part of the year and during the remainder work on their homesteads. That phase passed. The supply of easily accessible land diminished. Farmers could not give year-round employment. Workless men flocked to the cities where there were not enough jobs to go round.

On top of all this, throughout the years the advance of science has further complicated the problem. Improved machinery has steadily

[Mr. MacNeil.]

reduced the amount of labour necessary for the production of any given volume of goods. This trend continues.

In February of this year there were 1,080,831 Canadians receiving direct unemployment relief. That did not include 156,944 farmers receiving aid in the dried-out areas.

How many of the men of fifty and over will ever get work again? Very few. A new generation has come up to take available jobs older men once had. There are 2,000,000 Canadians between sixteen and twenty-one years of age. It seems that the number of employables is increasing faster than the number of jobs. In recent months relief expenditures and employment figures have risen together.

Unemployment must be regarded as a permanent problem.

The main point is that the national unemployment commission is only going to be worth the money spent on it if it is enabled to consider the problem of unemployment in its broader and most far-reaching aspects; if it is encouraged to evolve a definite policy that will, in the course of time, take care of all interlocking social burdens.

It isn't a matter of plugging a leak in a dyke. It is a matter of an entire reconstruction plan.

I am frankly dismayed that there is not greater readiness to engage in the program of reconstruction demanded by this alarming prospect of conditions of permanent unemployment in Canada. The policy of the government contemplates little more than the attempt to stop some of the dykes that have been torn away by unregulated private enterprise. In any event I cannot agree to anything that would in any degree aggravate the distress of those involved. In my opinion the security of our Canadian homes is of infinitely greater importance than the security of special privilege as now maintained by the existing financial structure. In the last analysis there can be but little security or stabilization of the financial system unless it is founded on the security and well-being of the workers. We have reached the point in our affairs where we have discovered that we can produce so abundantly that business cannot prosper unless the masses live abundantly.

If we listen to the voice of private enterprise we learn of an insistence to lower living standards so that relief may not check the downward revision of wages desired. C. H. Carlisle, president of the Dominion Bank, recently declared:

We cannot maintain everyone on relief on a scale of comfort. The vast masses of the people, if kept on a scale of even bare comfort, are not sufficiently inclined to get out and vigorously hunt for work and accept work when it is offered.

This is but one of many statements made recently which quite ignores the realities of the situation, and indicates the ruthlessness