

Unemployment Relief

could have had the use of that building for the duration of the war. If we are going to have equality of sacrifice, if we are going to conscript wealth and industry, that would be the right place to begin at this time. It is inexcusable to spend three-quarters of a million dollars for this purpose, and I suggest that we are justified in saying to the government that they are hindering our war effort by sinking money in an investment of this kind, an investment that is as dead as a door-nail.

A few days ago I received a copy of a magazine with beautiful pictures in which suggestions are given as to where one can go for a holiday. I am sure some of the members of this house, and especially government supporters, must have forgotten that the people in western Canada especially do not know what a holiday means. It is about time that we thought of giving them a chance at least to exist. Recently I read a book with the strange title "How to Live On Nothing a Day," written presumably by a Liberal. It is an attempt to force the philosophy upon the people of Canada that it is possible to exist and enjoy life, not on a dollar a day, not on a dollar a year, but on nothing a day. Why should anyone suggest such a thing? We should try to help people along.

We have often heard from the government side the statement that this is war-time and that their obligations are exceptionally heavy. Of course, they will offer a whole lot of such excuses. But great men, any number of great men working together, never shun their responsibilities or look for excuses; they rise to the occasion. If they are really big men they can cope with any situation, no matter how serious it may be, and excuses of that sort are nothing but admissions that the government is incapable of dealing with the problems of the day. Until the poorest and the humblest in our country are provided with food, clothing and shelter, neither this nor any other government in Canada can pride itself upon having discharged its obligations to the people.

I do not know how many of us have ever stopped to consider the implications of what is called interest. We in western Canada have had a little more to do with interest than some of the people in the eastern part of the country, and I have been wondering why the federal government in the past has never concerned itself with the fact that our people have paid interest rates ranging from one to fourteen per cent. May I point out something in simple arithmetic. One dollar at three per cent compound interest gives a total in one hundred years of \$19.22—using one hundred

[Mr. Hlynka.]

years as a round figure. One dollar compounded at the rate of eight per cent gives a total of \$2,199.76, and one dollar at ten per cent gives a total of \$13,780.00—and mind you, our people have had to pay at the rate of \$13,780 for the use of one dollar; at least, that is what it would amount to over a period of one hundred years. But we have never heard of any supporter of the government getting up on the floor of this house and telling the government that this is going a little too far, that this burden should be taken off the shoulders of the people. They have allowed our people to pay this rate of interest and to-day they wonder why the morale of the Canadian people and of the people of the British empire is not as strong as it should be. That is the real reason.

Who invented this compound interest? I should like to know who gets the benefit of it. Surely not the poor people in western Canada, not the producer, not the worker. What would this government say if our farmers in western Canada refused to produce wheat on the assurance that they would get five per cent above the cost of production? They would say it was sabotage. Some of the manufacturing concerns have refused to put in tenders in time of war because they were not allowed more than five per cent profit. I say to you, Mr. Chairman, that this is real sabotage. If the farmers of western Canada were assured of five per cent above the cost of production I am sure they would be satisfied; and on behalf of those farmers I ask that this government consider at least the question of the cost of production.

Mr. MAYHEW: Will the hon. gentleman permit a question?

Mr. HLYNKA: When I get through.

Mr. GARDINER: What has this to do with the bill?

Mr. HLYNKA: I am trying to point out to hon. members that the farmers of the west must receive greater assistance than they have received in the past. I have pointed out on other occasions that they did not need charity but only what was coming to them.

Mr. GARDINER: Assistance to the farmers of western Canada, about which the hon. gentleman is talking, has been carried on under another bill.

Mr. HLYNKA: Section 3 of the bill reads:

3. The governor in council may enter into agreements:

(a) with any of the provinces respecting the alleviation of unemployment conditions and of agricultural distress therein and to assist those in need;

I believe that settles it.