

very clear statement that what evidently was contemplated by those who were proposing a waterway in which the two countries would unite was something to help in a presidential campaign. May I ask the Prime Minister whether the fact that a presidential campaign is in progress in the United States at the present time has anything to do with the signing of this treaty by his administration at this juncture, thus throwing to the winds for the sake of a presidential campaign in the United States the policy which the Conservative party enunciated at its convention in Winnipeg as the one which would govern that party in this matter if returned to power.

I do not need to discuss the St. Lawrence waterway question further at this moment because, as I have already said, it may serve the purpose of a presidential campaign and then possibly we may not hear anything of it for some time to come. I would, however, say to my right hon. friend that in his anxiety to finally conclude a treaty at this time, he appears to have been much more solicitous of the desires of the United States in this matter than he has been of unifying the views of the provinces of Canada, and of seeing that, in dealing with an international question such as this, he did not at the same time raise a more serious domestic problem in this dominion.

What is the next item referred to in the speech from the throne? It reads:

A committee has been appointed by order in council to inquire into the operation of the Pensions Act so that my ministers may have before them all information necessary to determine whether further action may be required to discharge the country's obligation to those who served in the great war.

I am sure that the statement that a committee has been appointed by order in council to inquire into the operation of the Pensions Act will prove a great consolation to those who are suffering a sense of injustice under this act. For what purpose has this committee been appointed? Has it been appointed to carry out some policy which the administration has in mind and which it is prepared to state? Not at all. The speech from the throne reads:

. . . so that my ministers may have before them all information necessary to determine whether further action may be required to discharge the country's obligation to those who served in the great war.

An hon. MEMBER: What is wrong with that?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My hon. friend asks, "What is wrong with that?" My answer is that it makes no declaration of policy, it gives to this house nothing in the way of

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

information as to what is intended shall be done; it is another endeavour on the government's part to appear to be doing something, when in reality nothing is being done. It bears out what I have been saying about the entire speech, that while it purports as respects the government to be dealing with great questions at a time of great need, in reality it affords little or nothing to this parliament helpful for the purposes of present discussion, and nothing to which the people of the country can look by way of remedy for their present ills.

Take the greatest of all questions, the one which has been referred to this afternoon by other speakers, that of unemployment. The present administration was elected to office primarily to deal with the problem of unemployment. It claimed it would end unemployment. It was on that particular cry above all others that hon. members opposite got into office. What does the speech from the throne have to say about the measures the government is providing to cope with unemployment which has been increasing year by year and month by month ever since hon. gentlemen took their seats upon the treasury benches? It says:

The problem of unemployment continues to receive the anxious attention of my ministers.

I think the public might have been spared that. The speech continues:

Under the powers granted them at the last session of parliament, they have been able to develop further, in cooperation with the provinces and municipalities, a scheme of direct relief to be put into operation during the autumn and winter months to the extent required by prevailing conditions. Plans for the reestablishment of the unemployed in various parts of the country are in preparation and will become operative as soon as, in the opinion of my ministers, the public expenditure incident thereto will be productive of commensurate benefits.

I ask the Prime Minister: What is there in all that that holds out a hope of any kind to the unemployed of this country with respect to the treatment they are to receive during the forthcoming winter, or at the present time? All that statement amounts to is an abandonment of the policies which the government heretofore has professed to put into force, and a declaration that they have no longer any policy but propose to deal hereafter with the question of unemployment on the basis of the dole, a contributory dole at that. That is the meaning of the statement in a nutshell. All that the government offers as a solution of the unemployment problem is the statement that it intends to associate itself with the provinces and the municipalities in a contributory dole which the unemployed