

when workers are unemployed they and their families suffer want and fear. The Minister of Labour speaks lightly about "pockets of unemployment", but the people I represent feel that it is the duty of the government so to plan our economy that useful work will be provided for all able-bodied citizens. The men who are fighting this war are not fighting so that they may come home to "pockets of unemployment". They are fighting for a Canada in which all our citizens will be employed producing an abundance of goods to make possible a high standard of living for all our people. If "pockets of unemployment" is the best the present government can do now, what in heaven's name are we in for after the war is over?

I listened closely on Monday to the Prime Minister's defence of the Minister of Labour. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) seemed utterly unable to understand why so much criticism has been directed against the Minister of Labour. I may say that I am a member of a trade union. I have close contacts with all sections of the trade union movement in greater Winnipeg. I had unanimous endorsement of the trade union movement in Winnipeg in the recent by-election campaign. I can say to the Prime Minister that labour in this country, both organized and unorganized, is up in arms against the Minister of Labour because he, as a trade unionist himself, posing as a labour man, is willing to administer the government's policy as it now stands. Labour is fed up with being told every time it seeks an adjustment in unjust and low wages that it is unpatriotic, that it is attacking the government's anti-inflation policy. Labour, Mr. Speaker, is fully aware of the perils of an inflationary spiral. But the freezing of unjust wages is not the only way to prevent inflation. It can be done, for example, by taxation and by rationing.

At the present time the government places upon the workers and farmers of this country the whole burden of avoiding inflation, and labour is thoroughly disgusted with the way in which the government uses this weapon to deny justice to the workers of Canada. Let me repeat that labour is fully conscious of the perils of inflation, and is not opposed to the government's aim to avoid it. But labour is opposed to the governments' one-sided policy in this matter, putting as it does the full burden on our farmers and workers.

In the thirties there was no money. Now there is too much money. If it is not one thing, it is another. But labour must be kept down. This is the policy of the government; and no one, least of all a labour man, can

[Mr. Knowles.]

expect to administer such a policy without a storm of protest from Canadian labour.

I may say further to the Prime Minister that one of the reasons labour delegations are seeking interviews with him, which he deplored on Monday in answer to a question about the Montreal aircraft workers, is that labour's grievances involve more than the matter of administration in the Department of Labour. They involve the whole policy of the government, in its attitude toward labour. I am confident no member of the house ever spoke the mind of his constituents more clearly than I do when I say that Canadian labour wants a new minister of labour in whom labour can have confidence.

But, Mr. Speaker, that is not all. Labour also wants a new labour policy, and I make that fact known directly to the Prime Minister. Apart from the injustices of the low-wage freezing policy, there is also the government's attitude toward trade union organizations, and the complete failure of the government to make labour, and agriculture as well, full partners in the common struggle in which we are all engaged.

By order in council the government has paid lip service to trade union organization and collective bargaining. But much more effective orders in council have denied these fundamental principles of democracy, in actual practice. I mention Kirkland lake, steel, Montreal Aircraft, Vulcan Iron Works at Winnipeg, and so on.

I would remind the house that the government picks its controllers, its dollar-a-year men, from the big businesses concerned, on the ground that they know what it is all about. But when it comes to the placing of men in employment, at which trade union business agents are specialists, they are not only ignored but their functions are superseded by the hodge-podge of selective service. To labour this is all seen as a well-designed attempt on the part of the government to prevent the common people in this country from coming into their own, in the kind of cooperative society for which this war is being fought. The farmers and workers of this country, supplying as they are the personnel of our armed forces, working and sacrificing in every possible way for victory, have an end in view—a Canada in which there will be full employment, fine homes for all, adequate education, care of our health, a high standard of living and full social security. These things cannot be denied forever. The processes of democracy may work slowly, but they are to-day working in favour of the common man, because of the interest he is taking in his own well-being.