

*Relief Act, 1933—Mr. Woodsworth*

Mr. GORDON: But I did not say what the hon. member added to that.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I am not suggesting that the minister did. But what I do suggest is this, that there are hundreds of thousands who to-day have no opportunity to get work. I repeat: It strikes me as almost adding insult to injury when the minister proceeds to give vent to some pious phrases about its being too bad that people rely too much upon the state, the implication being that they would not thus develop their own private initiative.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Haywire.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Somebody says "haywire," and others say: "Do not let him get away with that sort of thing." I want to give some more "haywire" given by the Prime Minister (Mr. Bennett) at Calgary on June 12, 1930, nearly three years ago. At that time the right hon. gentleman, who is now Prime Minister and who was then seeking to become one, said:

This is a new country, and there is no excuse for unemployment in Canada if a government does its duty.

That is haywire now; it is haywire when it is uttered by a private member of the opposition, but I do not know whether it was haywire when it was given in Calgary by a gentleman who was seeking to attain office. I am inclined to think it is true that:

This is a new country, and there is no excuse for unemployment in Canada if a government does its duty.

Mr. MORAND: How about other countries?

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Never mind other countries; I shall come to that presently. The Prime Minister came to that. He went on to say:

Law and order must be maintained. Men and women must not starve. Mothers must have clothes.

There are thousands of them who have not.

Mr. GORDON: That is not correct.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: It is correct.

Mr. GORDON: No, it is not.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: The Prime Minister continues:

Children cannot be subjected to the rigours of this climate unless properly cared for.

Voice: "Thousands are starving now."

Mr. Bennett: I am sorry to hear any are starving, sorrier than I can tell. I am not for a single moment endeavouring to make political capital out of it, but I am bound as a public man who may have to accept great responsi-

[Mr. Woodsworth.]

bilities with respect to government to say to the people of Canada that this is a blot worthy of the condemnation of any government responsible for it, and, men and women, I propose to remedy this.

Further on he said:

I realize that this country is now living in the month of June (1930)—

That is almost three years ago, may I interject.

—and unemployment in every part of the country is not decreasing as it should.

Is it decreasing to-day? It is increasing steadily.

There are men and women without food in Canada—

The Prime Minister said that. Haywire again!

There are men and women without food in Canada to properly sustain life and someone says it is just as bad in some other country.

An hon. gentleman across the floor suggested another country. The Prime Minister said this, and may I adopt his words:

My duty is to my native land, this dominion.

It is always a favourite practice to try to draw a red herring across the trail by referring to some other country. The present Prime Minister in those days refused to be diverted, and quite rightly so. He said:

My duty is to my native land, this dominion.

Even if there are people starving in China—

An hon. MEMBER: Russia.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: —in Russia, as there are, in Italy; even if they are starving over there, does that make it any easier for our people in Canada who are on the verge of starvation? I continue to quote the present Prime Minister:

They say the problem is a problem of the city, let the city look after it. Another says it is the province, and let the province look after them, and someone is saying the federal power should look after them, and I confess to you that this problem has given me more concern than any other single matter engaging my attention during the last few years. After all, no man who has a heart can see the mothers and children without clothes or food without emotion, however hardhearted he may be. What are we going to do about it? . . .

I say to you, my fellow citizens, my fellow Canadians, speaking to the larger audience, I am convinced this problem has now ceased to be local and provincial and has become national in its importance.

If it were national in its importance three years ago, it is still the same. It is appalling that year after year we continue to squabble about whether jurisdiction belongs to a provincial government or to a federal government, whether it is a municipal or a provincial